

ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY IN A BASQUE BORDERLAND:  
RIOJA ALAVESA, SPAIN

By

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## PREFACE

Research involving human subjects requires ethical decisions about how findings will be presented. In this inquiry into Basque identity in a borderland context, I was concerned about guaranteeing the anonymity of my informants, and also about more subtle issues, such as whether to use Basque or Spanish place names, or English translations of them. As Urla noted in her study of the Basque language, it is impossible to find "a politically neutral language" when discussing issues of Basque identity (Urla 1987:ii). I agree with her that it is best to acknowledge one's choices at the outset.

To ensure confidentiality, I have changed the names of all of the informants quoted in this study. However, I did not change place names. Since a crucial part of the analysis is based on local history, and the relation of perceptions of local history and interpuerblo stereotypes, it would have been artificial to change the place names. Even if I had invented names, anyone from the area would immediately distinguish the real locations based on the historical and other descriptions of them. Also, the people of the villages of Lapuebla de Labarca, Laguardia, and

Elciego, the main research sites, were generally supportive of my research efforts, and made no requests for anonymity.

Language is, and has been, politicized in Spain. The central state's repression of regional languages under Franco and in earlier periods fostered the perception of regional language as a symbol of resistance to both cultural and political domination. One of the first language planning activities of the post-Franco autonomous Basque government has been to replace monolingual Spanish signs and maps with bilingual and monolingual Basque signs and maps (Urla 1987:iv).

For this study, however, mostly Spanish names and spellings are used because they are used by the majority of the monolingual Spanish-speaking population of Rioja Alavesa. The Basque language of Euskera had not been spoken in this southern border zone of the Basque province of Alava for several centuries, and school children have only been studying the language since the late 1970s. The words and spellings used in this text represent those used by the majority of my informants who refer to the Spanish Basque provinces by their Spanish rather than their Basque names: Guipúzcoa instead of Gipuzkoa, Vizcaya instead of Bizcaya, Alava instead of Araba, and Navarra instead of Naparroa. They also mostly use the Spanish names for the capital cities of the provinces, Bilbao instead of Bilbo, San Sebastián instead of Donostia, and Vitoria instead of

Gasteiz. I did hear a few people refer to San Sebastián as Donostia, and school children who have been studying the Basque language are more likely to use Basque words and spellings.

I have used the Basque word for the Basque language, Euskera. People in Rioja Alavesa used this term, or the Spanish word, Vasco, in referring to the Basque language. Vasco, translating to Basque, is also the Spanish word for a member of the Basque group. This was the term used by my informants, and I mostly use the English translation, "Basque" in the text. The Basque word for a member of the Basque group is Euskaldun, which means a Basque speaker. People in Rioja Alavesa sometimes employed this term to refer to native Basque speakers, but this is a category from which they are excluded. The Spanish term, Vasco, is a broader category in which language is not specified (Urla 1987:iii) and was the common term used to refer to a Basque in Rioja Alavesa.

Informants also mostly used the Spanish words País Vasco, which translates to the Basque Country in English, to refer to the Basque territories. I have used the English translation in the text. Some in Rioja Alavesa also used the Spanish term, Vascongadas - roughly translating to the Basque provinces, and the Basque word, Euskadi - land of the Basque people. Few ever used the original Basque word for the Basque territory, Euskalherria (or Euskal Herria), which

means land of the Basque-speaking people. This word, like Euskaldun, excludes them from a Basque identity.

The dissertation examines the impacts of Rioja Alavesa's 1979 incorporation into the autonomous Basque community on local and Basque identity in the zone. One recommendation for future research would be to find out if a trend towards use of Basque rather than Spanish place names evolves as the next generation is taught Euskera.

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Chairman: Dr. Anthony Oliver-Smith  
Major Department: Anthropology

Most studies of ethnic groups focus on the "core ethnics"--those who most possess the traits used to identify the group and/or the leaders who organize ethnic movements. Anthropologists, through ethnographic research, can contribute to elucidation of the complexities behind such gross ethnic labels as "the Scots," "the Basques," "the Native Americans." Exploration of diversity within ethnic groups challenges views of ethnic entities as discrete and bounded units.

This dissertation analyzes identity maintenance and change in a border zone of the Basque province of Alava in northeastern Spain. Approximately ten thousand people live in the twenty-two villages and hamlets of Rioja Alavesa, a subzone of Alava known for the production of fine wines.

Inhabitants have been geographically, culturally and linguistically isolated from other Basques. A regional identity based on the wine and viti-vinicultural lifeway is shared with neighbors of adjacent provinces who are also part of the Riojan wine-producing district. Rioja Alavesa's borderland status makes it a feasible site for the examination of changing perceptions of regional and ethnic identity, especially since Alava's 1979 incorporation into the autonomous Basque community. Most people of Rioja Alavesa did not identify themselves as Basques before 1979.

Leaders of the seventeen regional governments of post-Franco, democratic Spain are mounting efforts to define and delimit the heritage and culture of people living within the boundaries of their respective autonomous communities. These developments are problematic for the people of Rioja Alavesa since cultural and political boundaries have not coincided there. For example, the Basque language of Euskera has not been spoken in Rioja Alavesa since medieval times, but schoolchildren in the zone are now required to study it.

Rioja Alavesa's historical isolation from the development of Basque nationalism and ideologies of Basqueness is outlined. Exploratory ethnographic research indicates Basque identity is intersecting three main contexts of local identity in Rioja Alavesa--identity with the pueblo, with the wine and viti-vinicultural lifeway, and

linguistic identity. The interplay of local and national identities in this border zone causes reconsideration of what it means to be a Basque.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The term "ethnic" has become a familiar word to many North Americans. We eat in ethnic restaurants, we check off an ethnic affiliation on application forms, we listen to news reports of ethnic violence and conflict in countries as diverse as the Soviet Union, India, and Canada. The word has such frequent and wide-ranging use that most people hold some generalized notion of what an ethnic group is. Ethnic groups are often assumed to share a common racial ancestry, a language, folk traditions, and an ancestral territory.

Scholarly investigations of ethnic groups, ethnic conflict, and the concept of ethnicity have become so numerous in recent decades that Bentley referred to "an academic ethnicity industry" (1981). The plethora of research has not resulted in a general model or definition of an ethnic group that can be applied to the variety of groups considered ethnic. Indeed, recent analysts illustrate the imprecision of the concept by delineating the subjective and malleable nature of much ethnic group membership (Cohen 1978, Connor 1977, Nagel 1986, Linz 1985, Grillo 1980, Banton 1981, Royce 1982, Heiberg 1980). This very imprecision, I contend, should be a main focus in

ethnicity studies. We need to examine processes of ethnic group formation, disintegration, or reformation. Worsley has called for an anthropological approach which explores how "ethnic identities are structurally generated, organized, ascribed, sustained and sanctioned" (1984:245). This approach implies a conception of ethnic groups as fluid and changeable.

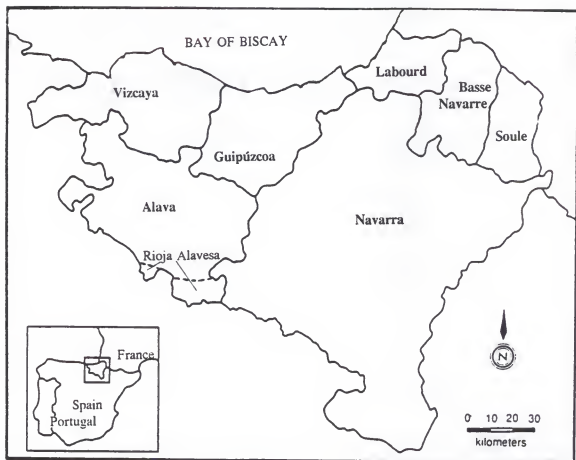
In spite of the theoretical and methodological murkiness of the subject, it is important to investigate ethnic groups and refine understandings of them. Ethnicity is increasingly used as an organizational base in bargaining or fighting for political, economic, and cultural resources in complex, multi-ethnic societies. As groups politicize around an ethnic identity, primordial traits associated with the group, such as a language, folk traditions, real or mythical ancestry or homeland, may become part of an ethnic ideology used to foster communal solidarity and sentiment. Selected traits are emphasized by ethnic leaders in representing the group, and longitudinal analyses often reveal changes in definitions of a group's identity over time (Barth 1969, Urla 1987, Heiberg 1980, Rothschild 1981). Ethnic groups may expand or contract membership, and adapt membership criteria (Nagel 1986).

An ethnic group's development of a self-conscious identity, or loss of identity, does not occur in isolation, but vis-à-vis contact and interaction with others (Barth



1969). The wider political, economic, and social milieus, and changes in them, affect the identity of ethnic groups, and their ability to organize (Nagel 1984, 1986). To understand ethnic identity at the community or small group level, the anthropologist needs to consider the community's interrelationships with these larger orders.

Bentley has called for study of the "microprocesses of how ethnic collectivities come into existence" (1987:26). Grillo posits that from traditional anthropology's synchronic frame of reference, "the emergence of identity was never seriously considered" and that a diachronic perspective often confirms that "the identity, and the implied boundary between 'Us' and 'Them', must vary in intensity, and probably content, situationally and historically" (1980:11). Analyzing processes of identity formation at the local level will help to answer the fundamental questions anthropologists and other scholars have asked regarding the nature of ethnic units and the motivations for ethnic movements. To advance our knowledge and understanding of ethnic groups, this dissertation examines Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa, a border zone of the Basque province of Alava in northeastern Spain, from a processual, diachronic perspective (see Figure 1).



Adapted from:  
(Zuilaika 1988:xvi)

Figure 1. The Seven Basque Provinces and Rioja Alavesa

Negotiating Identity in a Borderland

Cohen noted that "ethnic group formation is a continuing and often innovative cultural process of boundary maintenance and reconstruction" (Cohen 1978:397). Cohen is referring here to cultural and ethnic boundaries, in contrast to political boundary lines. Leach defines a border zone as a zone "through which cultures interpenetrate in a dynamic manner" (Leach 1960:49). In other words, border zones are often characterized by ambiguous and overlapping cultural and ethnic boundaries. The construction and reconstruction of such boundaries may be more clearly observed in border zones such as Rioja Alavesa, where current debates about Basque identity result from the nature of the zone's border status.

Most studies of ethnic groups tend to focus on ethnic "cores." The "ethnic cores" are composed of those in the group who most possess and represent the traits which distinguish the group; or, those in the group most active in motivating ethnic mobilization. Study of border populations can correct tendencies to homogenize ethnic groups and can clarify diversity within the ethnic group. At the periphery of the ethnic territory, processes of group formation or disintegration may be more detectable.

The Spanish Basques are one of the best known and most volatile of European ethnic groups. However, not all of the people who live within the political boundaries which

demarcate the Basque provinces share in the cultural, linguistic, and racial heritage which has been used to define Basqueness. Immigrants from other parts of Spain make up a large proportion of the population in Basque industrial areas. Also, communities geographically distant from the Basque heartland zones of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, such as Rioja Alavesa, have been subject to different historical influences. In addition to diversity within the Spanish Basque lands, the Basques of France have evolved differently from those in Spain.

The present international boundary line between Spain and France, formalized in 1659, divides the Basque provinces. Four provinces--Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, Alava, and Navarra--are in Spain, and three--Labourd, Basse Navarre, and Soule--are in France (see Figure 1). Approximately 2.3 million people, or more than 90 percent of the total Basque population, live on the Spanish side of the frontier. Basque nationalists consider that the seven Basque provinces form one integral "ethno-nation" (Clark 1979:5). A common graffito spray-painted on walls in the Spanish Basque provinces states simply: " $4 + 3 = 1$ ," a slogan for the unification of the seven Basque provinces into an independent nation. Although the differential development of the French and Spanish nation-states has had profound impacts on the culture, language and identity of French and Spanish Basques (Douglass 1977, Clark 1979, Gómez Ibáñez

1975), this study limits its focus to diversity within the Spanish Basque provinces, particularly within the autonomous Basque community comprised of Alava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya. The autonomous community, as well as the the wider Basque area, are referred to as Euskadi (land of the Basque people) or Euskalherria (land of Basque-speaking people) in the Basque language, and País Vasco (Basque Country) or Vascongadas (Basque provinces) in Castilian. I will use the autonomous Basque community and the Basque Country interchangeably in this dissertation.

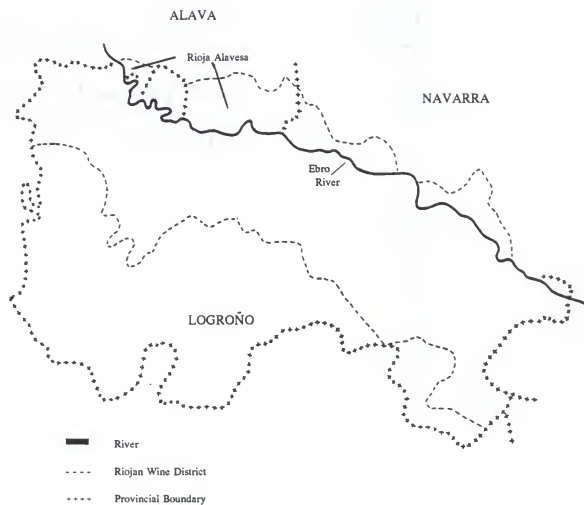
Since the democratization of Spain following Franco's death in 1975, regional autonomous governments have been established in the Basque as well as sixteen other regions of the country. This political change has precipitated movements in the newly established autonomous communities to expand and promote regional and ethnic cultures and languages. The autonomous Basque government's encouragement of Basque identity throughout Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, and Alava is affecting ethnic and regional affiliations in Rioja Alavesa. Since the zone is geographically and historically removed from the heartland of Basque activity, most inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa have, until recently, identified themselves as marginal Basques and/or as Riojanos (inhabitants of the geographic region of Rioja).

With Alava's incorporation into the autonomous Basque community, regional and ethnic identities are in flux in

Rioja Alavesa. This dissertation will examine processes of identity maintenance and change in Rioja Alavesa through consideration of several broad questions: 1. How is Basque identity being introduced in Rioja Alavesa? 2. How is Basque identity expressed by the inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa? 3. What changes in Basque ethnic ideology foster incorporation of diverse groups into the ethnic nation?

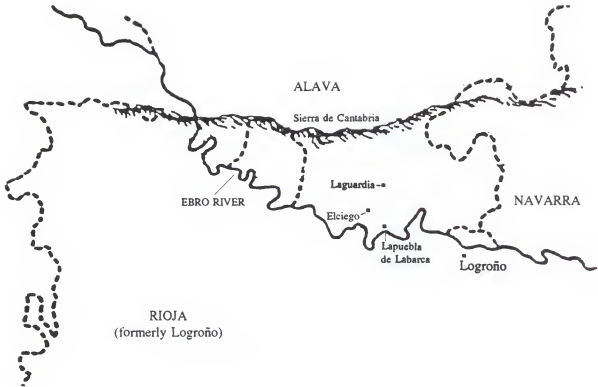
Until 1982, "Rioja" was the name used to denote the geographic region of the Ebro River Valley which shares the ecological niche and lifeway of grape-growing and wine-making. This region included Rioja Alavesa, as well as parts of the neighboring provinces of Navarra and Logroño--it was a geographic rather than a political designation (see Figure 2). However, in 1982, the province of Logroño gained status as an autonomous community, and changed its name to Rioja. This political unit of Rioja is bounded by the Ebro and excludes Rioja Alavesa and Navarra. Controversy regarding Logroño's adoption of the name Rioja will be discussed in Chapter Five.

The Cantabrian Mountains separate the approximate ten thousand inhabitants of the twenty-two municipalities and hamlets of Rioja Alavesa from the rest of the Basque province of Alava, while the Ebro River forms the southwest boundary between Alava and the autonomous community of Rioja, formerly the province of Logroño (see Figure 3). Some informants from Rioja Alavesa argued that the



Adapted from:  
(Orbañanos Carrillo 1981:201)

Figure 2. Riojan Wine District



Adapted from:  
(Sainz Ripa 1982:144)

Figure 3. Geographic Boundaries of Rioja Alavesa and  
Primary Research Sites



Cantabrian Mountains would have been a more accurate boundary between the Basque lands and the Rioja valley, since the valley area, which includes Rioja Alavesa, has distinct customs associated with a shared environment and viti-vinicultural lifeways.

In fact, for the brief period from 1821 to 1823, Rioja Alavesa was incorporated into an administrative province of Logroño, which included those communities north of the Ebro River and south of the Cantabrian Mountains considered part of the geographic region of Rioja. But due to political fluctuations, to be discussed in Chapter Three, the constitution which enacted this provincial division was voided and the contemporary provincial boundaries which place Rioja Alavesa in Alava, and the province of Logroño south of the Ebro for the most part, were established in 1833 (Sainz Ripa 1983a).

If the 1821 division had remained intact, Basque identity would not likely be an issue in Rioja Alavesa today. But political boundaries infrequently correspond exactly to cultural and geographic boundaries, and, for people at the edges of such overlapping boundaries, regional and ethnic identity may be ambiguous. Therefore, the study of identity in this borderland of Rioja Alavesa will contribute to clarification of processes of ethnic identity change. The political boundary dividing the Basque and Riojan autonomous communities is taking on increasing

significance in people's sense of who they are in both Rioja Alavesa and neighboring Rioja.

To understand the current status of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa, a diachronic perspective is necessary. The ethnographic present must be viewed within the context of the history of Rioja Alavesa, the history of Basque nationalism, and in relation to Spain's development as a nation state. Thus, this dissertation is both historical and ethnographic. In the first half of the dissertation, I describe the historical, political, and economic background necessary to contextualize the ethnographic materials presented in the second part. In the rest of this introductory chapter, I want to provide readers with an overview of the physical and historical setting of the research site, an explanation of research methodology, and a description of the organization of the dissertation.

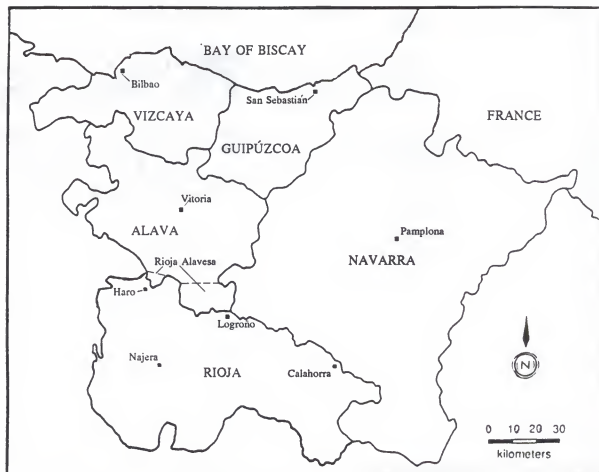
#### Overview of the Physical and Historical Setting

Although little known to tourists from Northern Europe or North America, the Rioja valley in northeastern Spain is a popular summer vacation area for urban dwellers from the industrial cities of the northern Basque provinces of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. Summer visitors include both natives from the North and migrants from Rioja Alavesa who live and work in the cities. Many return year after year to the same villages where they rent apartments from the locals, or have purchased summer homes. The dry, temperate summer climate

is sought as a respite from the variable weather and pollution of northern cities such as Bilbao and San Sebastian (see Figure 4).

The villages of the Ebro River Valley dot the landscape every few kilometers. These clustered settlements, crowned by their medieval church spires and occasional fortress castles, nestled among the patchwork fields of vineyards and cereal crops, offer a peaceful contrast to urban life. The people of the Rioja valley are known for their hospitality, and are associated with the customs of making and enjoying good wine and food in their ancestral family wineries. A "wine culture" of earthy and communal pleasures is also attractive to the summer visitors from the cities. While tourists enjoy the friendly, bucolic atmosphere of village life, they also have easy access to the lively and sophisticated cities of Logroño and Vitoria, and large towns such as Haro and Najera, which are located in or near the area (see Figure 4).

This portrait of a tranquil valley of agricultural communities, considered a summer haven by city dwellers from northern Spain, belies the fact that this portion of the Ebro River Valley known as the Riojas has been battleground, crossroads and frontier throughout much of its history. Its strategic location, surrounded by mountains, with a good water supply from the Ebro River and its



Adapted from:  
(Zuilaika 1988:xvi)

Figure 4. Principal Cities of the Spanish Basque Provinces and Principal Cities and Towns of the Autonomous Community of Rioja

tributaries, and fertile soil, made it a desirable settlement site.

Most of the racial and ethnic groups ancestral to the Spanish people have lived and mingled in the area. Prehistoric remains indicate that different tribes, of Celtic and Basque origin, inhabited and possibly contested the zone. The Romans gradually subdued the indigenous peoples--by the last third of the second century B.C., they had brought the Iberian Peninsula under unified rule. By the 480s A.D., the semi-barbarian, Christianized Visigoths from northern Europe took over Spain from the Romans. They were defeated by the Moors in 711, who conquered the Ebro Valley around 717. Although the Moors were firmly established south of the Ebro until 923, most areas north of the river remained a contested frontier between the Moors and Christian forces from the North. Eventually, the kings of Navarra and Leon gained major portions of Moorish territory south of the river in 923, and Najera, a town in this zone, became the preferred capital of the Christian kingdom of Navarra.

From the tenth to the fifteenth centuries, Spain was divided into a mosaic of small Christian kingdoms as lands were gradually won from the Moors by various Christian nobles. Basque and other migrants from the north settled in the newly conquered Christian territories such as the

Riojas. Rioja again emerged as a frontier, between the Castilian and Navarrese kingdoms. Not until 1486, when most of the Rioja settlements north of the Ebro were incorporated into the Hermanidad (League) of Alava, a semi-autonomous organization of villas and municipalities within the Kingdom of Castile, did a period of comparative peace begin. This political division of the geographic region of the Ebro Valley known as Rioja between the Hermanidad of Alava and the rest of Castile resulted in the introduction of the names "Rioja Alavesa" and "Rioja Castellana" ("Castilian Rioja") to distinguish the administrative zones.

The Camino de Santiago de Compostela (Pilgrim's Way of St. James of Compostela), established in the medieval era, also brought foreign influences to the Riojas. The shrine of St. James the Apostle in Galicia, thought to hold the saint's remains, attracted many thousands of pilgrims from all over Europe. As the Christian Reconquest of Spain from the Moors proceeded successfully southward, the main pilgrim's route was moved further south by the eleventh century, and passed through the Riojas. The French monks who managed the path established hostelries for the pilgrims in the Riojas (Abad Leon 1975).

This historical sketch demonstrates the diversity of peoples and cultures which influenced the development of the Riojas. This history, combined with the political division of the area into different administrative provinces, has not

fostered a strong regional or ethnic identity based on a unique and unified linguistic, racial or political heritage. Rather, the valley evolved an identity and culture based on the shared ecological niche favorable to the development of a quality wine industry, for which the name Rioja has gained fame. Beyond the potent village level identities, this "people of the vine and wine" identity has distinguished the Riojas. Yet, inhabitants have been politically divided in the Carlist Wars of the nineteenth century and in the Spanish Civil War. In addition, the political administrative provincial divisions have meant different policies and brought varied benefits to people living on either side of the river.

The forty year Franco regime, avowedly anti-regionalist and repressive of all political freedoms, provided no legitimate channels for regional political organization or expression. All authority was vested in the authoritarian central government which espoused an ideology of Dios y Patria (God and Fatherland). The northern Basque provinces of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa were treated by Franco as "traitor" territories because they supported the Republicans during the Civil War of 1936 to 1939. Franco implemented policies of political and cultural oppression in those provinces. These actions strengthened northern Basque desires for independence and fostered the formation of underground

organizations to counter the regime and to retain the Basque language.

In Alava and Navarra, a majority had supported Franco's rebel forces and these provinces were rewarded with tax exemptions and other economic advantages by the regime. The Spanish Civil War, and Franco's subsequent dissimilar policies towards the four Spanish Basque provinces, further differentiated the already distinct zones. Political identity as Basque was not viewed as advantageous by many inhabitants of Alava and Navarra, and was not a legally available option from 1939 to 1976. Alava and Navarra had also been relatively isolated from the main currents of Basque ethnic nationalism which originated in Bilbao in the late nineteenth century. These two provinces voted against joining the Basque autonomous government approved by the Republicans in 1936. Alava did join Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa as part of the Basque autonomous community established in 1979. Navarra, although considered one of the four Spanish Basque provinces, again declined to join an autonomous Basque community in 1979. Many Navarrese consider their history and culture distinct enough from the other Basque zones to stand on their own as a separate region. The Navarrese voted to form a separate autonomous community in 1982 (Clark 1989). It should be noted that the Basque language of Euskera is still spoken in some northern zones of both Alava and Navarra.



Spain's peaceful and surprisingly rapid transition to a democratic government following Franco's death in 1975 led to the establishment of seventeen regional autonomous communities by 1983 (see Figure 5). The Spanish Constitution of 1978 provided for the formation of the autonomous communities as a new level of government between Madrid and the forty-seven provinces of Spain. The Constitution allowed for the creation of the communities through a process wherein the potential community petitioned the Madrid government for autonomy, which, if accepted, was returned for final approval by the citizens of the area through a referendum (Clark 1989).

The Basques and Catalans were the first to achieve autonomous community status in 1979, followed by Galicia in 1981. The drafting of the autonomy statutes was done with these three "historic" regions in mind. The Basque Country, Catalonia, and Galicia are considered the "historic regions" because each had advocated autonomous status or independence prior to the Spanish Civil War. The Catalans were granted an autonomy statute under Spain's Second Republic in 1932; the Basque autonomy statute was granted in October of 1936, shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War in July of the same year; and Galicia had negotiated a statute of autonomy prior to the war, although it was not actually implemented (Clark 1989).



1. GALICIA
2. ASTURIAS
3. CANTABRIA
4. PAIS VASCO
5. NAVARRA
6. LA RIOJA
7. ARAGON
8. CATALUÑA
9. PAIS VALENCIANO
10. CASTILLA-LA MANCHA
11. MADRID
12. CASTILLA-LEON
13. EXTREMADURA
14. ANDALUCIA
15. CANARIAS
16. MURCIA
17. BALEARES

(Larroque 1983:25)

Figure 5. The Autonomous Communities of Spain

It has been suggested (Clark 1989) that the Spanish leaders who drafted the 1978 Constitution originally envisioned that the Basques, Catalans and Galicians would be the only groups who would request autonomous status and that the role of the other provinces would be left unaltered. However, Andalusia petitioned for, and gained autonomous community status in 1981. Following Andalusia's success, all of the other regions of Spain petitioned for autonomy statutes, as if to suggest that anything less would indicate second-class status. By early 1983, statutes had been approved in all the regions of Spain except the North African city enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla (Clark 1989:15-30).

Transfer of specific powers to the autonomous communities is negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the central government. The 1978 Constitution included guidelines for the governments of the autonomous communities to administer transportation, utilities, social services, public health, public works, and housing within the regions; regulation of regional agriculture and industry; regional economic development, environmental protection, cultural preservation, and education in regional languages (Article 148, Constitution of 1978, cited in Larroque 1983:37-38). The wide variations in size, population, and economic and political weight of the seventeen communities has complicated the process of transfer of powers. Negotiations

have been particularly problematic for the two most politically and economically powerful communities, the Basques and the Catalans. Clark (1989) analyzes the complexities of Spain's decentralization process in detail.

The governments of the autonomous communities, especially in the historic regions of Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country, are implementing policies and programs to revive and foster regional cultural and linguistic identities. Leaders of less "ethnically" unique regions, such as the autonomous community of Rioja, are also mounting efforts to articulate a regional cultural identity and to inculcate pride in it. In addition, varying educational, taxation and economic development policies of the communities serve to differentiate them. Consequently, "we"- "them" distinctions between inhabitants of the different autonomous communities are being forged.

Promotion of the idea that the political boundaries of the autonomous communities enclose distinct peoples is particularly problematic for a border zone such as Rioja Alavesa. Inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa have greater social interchange and share more customs with neighbors south of the Ebro (in the autonomous community of Rioja) than with Basques from the northern provinces. Their proximity to, and interrelationships with, the inhabitants of the autonomous community of Rioja contribute to Rioja Alaveses' perceptions that the true Basques, or, as many of them

phrased it, "los Vasco-Vascos" ("the Basque-Basques") are natives of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. Rioja Alavesa's historical status as a border zone ruled by various groups; its distance and isolation from the mainstream of the Basque ethnic nationalist movement in the early part of the century; and Franco's divisive policies, also influence inhabitants' sense of regional and ethnic identity. When the summer visitors from the northern provinces arrive in the villages of Rioja Alavesa, the locals usually comment, "Here come the Basques."

Basque identity is commonly viewed as something to be recuperated in the zone, or something to be learned. Ethnic and regional identities are increasingly meaningful to locals as these identities become associated with political and economic agendas. The comments of several inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa reflect the ambivalence about ethnic and regional identity which was prevalent in 1987:

I'm Basque, but I consider myself more Riojano than Basque. Because I live in the Basque Country I'm Basque, but the Riojan draws me more (female, age 36).

Traditions here are like Logroño more or less, in the climate, in the form of speaking--because when we go to Bilbao, they often call us Riojanos--because we have the accent more like Logroño, more than the Basque (female, age 35).

We're of the "second division," or, you might say, they consider us less Basque. From Vitoria to Vizcaya, they're more Basque. They speak Basque and here we speak Castilian. Before the war, the Basque-Basques were those who spoke Basque. Now they consider us as much Basques as they are. But they always see us as marginals (male, age 65).

I feel more Basque--since we learn more in school about Basque culture, we feel more Basque than our parents who learned Castilian (female, age 13).

Such comments reveal that ethnic and regional identities are not fixed and well defined categories in Rioja Alavesa. I was fortunate to be there soon after the establishment of Spain's autonomous communities and to observe and document the construction of a Basque ethnic identity engaged in by both regional elites and locals themselves.

A study of ethnic identity in a border zone such as Rioja Alavesa calls for a "processual" model of ethnicity -- one in which change and historical context are considered crucial to understanding the dynamic nature of Basque identity in the zone. If I were to use static definitions of ethnic identity based on shared primordial traits, it would be possible to compile from various sources a standardized depiction of a Basque based on a list of "Basque" markers such as language, ancestry, and racial features. Then, I could determine whether inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa shared in these traits and if they did not, I might conclude that they are not authentic Basques. But, when ethnic identity is considered from a processual and diachronic frame of reference, different kinds of questions are asked. I do not propose to prove or disprove the Basqueness of the inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa, but rather, to ask how definitions of Basqueness have evolved and affected other levels of identity in Rioja Alavesa over

time. My aim is to explore how the people I knew are adapting and changing their ideas about Basque identity in response to changing conditions.

Moore (1987) has posed the provocative question of how "the fieldworker is to address the historical process that is unfolding right in front of him or her" (728). She notes anthropologists' emerging recognition of the importance of the historical dimension, of the need to understand our traditionally small-scale research sites within the contexts of larger scale historical processes:

The structural-functional assumption that a society is best studied as if it were a system replicating itself has long been abandoned. The identification of change-in-the-making is one of the present objects of analysis. The normality of continuity is not assumed. Sameness being repeated is seen as the product of effort. Conjectures about the future thus become an implicit part of the understanding of the present (Moore 1987: 727).

The period of fieldwork, then, is but a "moment in a sequence," and Moore asks how the anthropologist can impose a diachronic framework on the kinds of small-scale, short-term research projects characteristic of the discipline. Moore's proposals for a "processual ethnography" as a methodological model for the anthropological study of culture change correspond to the way I carried out this study.

### Methodology

When the anthropologist finds herself in the midst of "unfolding historical process," as I did in Rioja Alavesa, the task of documenting "change-in-the-making" dominates the research effort. My fieldwork period coincided with a significant time of flux in how people were defining boundaries between "us" and "them." But this period is just part of a continuum of adaptation and change. Rioja Alavesa is not suddenly being thrust from an ancestral stasis of functional equilibrium into transition. As noted, the area has been crossroads, frontier and battleground to numerous cultural and ethnic groups throughout its history. Franco's regime did, however, impose a politically static period that contrasts markedly with the political volatility of the post-Franco democracy. Analysis of Basque ethnic identity in the area must consider both the historical circumstances which distanced Basques from Spaniards, as well as those which distanced Rioja Alaveses from Basques. Moore explains a processual framework for analysis which can account for a continuum of changing social structure:

A process approach does not proceed from the ideal of a received order that is then changed. Process is simply a time-oriented perspective on both continuity and change. (1987:729)

Moore suggests the incorporation of a processual perspective in research strategy through the study of "diagnostic events," those which "carry this burden of historical meaning." For example, observing change in



traditional customs of inheritance of land could reveal indications of larger processes of change at work. Identifying the kinds of diagnostic events or themes to be studied in depth involves a "receptivity to data as it comes along" and an openness "to recording uncertainty and disorder on the ethnographic scene" (Moore 1987:730). Farmer has also articulated and used the processual orientation and notes that "processual ethnography attempts to call attention to the problems inherent in studying cultural meaning while it is taking shape" (Farmer 1990:6).

Processual ethnography, then, is essentially exploratory in that the researcher must first discover the local contexts which are indicative of change. This can be accomplished through participant observation in daily life. Schatzman and Strauss comment, "a dialogue with persons in their natural situations will reveal the nuances of meaning from which their perspectives and definitions are continually forged" (1973:6). During the first three months of participant observation in Rioja Alavesa, I was able to distinguish three local contexts of identity in which Basqueness was becoming an issue. Identity with the vitivinicultural, or wine-growing, wine-making lifeway; identity with one's pueblo; and linguistic identity, were often used in demarcating "we" - "them" boundaries by locals. These identities are being influenced by Alava's incorporation into the autonomous Basque community. Within each of these

broad contexts of identity, events such as local elections, pueblo fiestas, traditional wine-making, and Basque language usage, provided evidence of locals' changing interpretations of Basque identity.

Once I determined these three foci as potentially revealing of the processes of identity maintenance and change in Rioja Alavesa, I supplemented participant observation with other research strategies. The collection and analysis of historical and statistical data, the construction and administration of an open-ended survey instrument, and formal interviews with regional and local leaders and scholars provided important data. Van Maanen (1983) notes that studies described as qualitative typically use a variety of methods in order to compare data on one topic from the viewpoints of several sources. This was an excellent strategy for integrating emic perspectives of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa learned through participant observation and informal interviewing with the wider historical, political, social milieus.

The kind of qualitative approaches discussed above have been deemed appropriate for studies concerned more with exploration and interpretation than prediction (Schatzman and Strauss 1973, Jorgensen 1989, Spradley 1980, Van Maanen 1983, Marshall and Rossman 1989, Glazer and Strauss 1967). Due to the ambiguity and complexity of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa precipitated by the recent political

transitions, an exploratory framework was appropriate for this investigation. Wolf and Cole (1974), Gross (1978) , Emmet (1982) and Cohen (1982) have used the community study as a baseline for the analysis of the interrelations of locally perceived identity distinctions and regional, ethnic and national influences on local identities in European contexts.

Emmet (1982) argues that her focus on the lives of ordinary people in a Welsh mining community, gained from direct observation and experience, allowed her to explore the relationship between the ideologies of Welsh nationalist political and cultural activists and the actual voters. She notes that analysis of only the role of ethnic elites, or of statistical indices alone, are not sufficient for understanding the complexities of group identity "on the ground," in communities of ordinary people. Likewise, Wolf and Cole (1974) describe the combined use of participant observation, interviews, historical, and statistical data as necessary to understand the complex and dialectic relations between the village and the nation in their study of two villages in the South Tyrol region of Italy.

In my own fieldwork, I did the majority of the participant observation in one village of Rioja Alavesa, Lapuebla de Labarca, where I lived during most of 1987. I also made contacts in two neighboring villages of Rioja Alavesa and frequently visited informants in those villages.

Like Gross (1978), and Wolf and Cole (1974), I analyzed both community identity, as well as the identity of a region or sub-region. To learn of local perceptions and expressions of identity, I integrated myself into daily and seasonal rounds of work, leisure and ritual as much as possible. Volunteering to help in vineyard-related activities provided an important means of building rapport, and a good avenue for interacting with men as well as women. Participating in work activities with several families throughout my fieldwork fostered friendships and entree into home life. I was also able to observe and photograph the seasonal round of vineyard related activities.

I participated in daily women's activities. Morning grocery shopping in the village shops was a good time for listening to gossip and for learning of events happening in the village that day. For example, a woman in a shop might invite me to observe her husband uprooting an old vineyard later in the day, or I might be invited to a child's birthday party. I also spent many late afternoons accompanying a womens' cuadrilla (friendship group) of six to ten women on their habitual afternoon walks into the countryside during the cool months, or card playing in the street during the warm months. I also attended weddings, a funeral, birthday parties, religious celebrations, and several of the annual pueblo patronal fiestas. I visited

the local school, observed students learning the Basque language, and interviewed students and teachers.

Through this open-ended research in the community, I learned of the importance of the pueblo and of the vitivinicultural lifeway as themes for "we"- "them" distinctions by locals. I also learned that the teaching of the Basque language in the schools is controversial. After three months of participant observation and informal interviewing, I constructed an interview instrument which included questions related to the topics of pueblo, vine-wine, linguistic, and Basque identity (see Appendix A).

I had gained enough rapport and trust by this time to feel comfortable about asking people to participate in this interview. In Spain, the inside of the house is usually considered private family space--most socializing is done in the streets, shops, and bars. Thus, I felt less awkward about asking to do these extended family interviews after establishing at least a minimal degree of familiarity and acceptance. During these sessions, people often digressed from specific questions and related pertinent stories and incidents, which I thought were well worth recording. Since I interviewed families together, three generations were sometimes present and disagreements between age groups were revealing. Fifteen family groups were interviewed, with a total of forty-four respondents in the fifteen groups. I tape recorded these one- to two-hour sessions, and, although

not amenable to statistical analysis, the resulting texts of conversations, stories, and arguments supplement materials gathered through participant observation and more informal interviews.

I consulted secondary sources for information on the political and economic history of Rioja and Rioja Alavesa, and for scholarly interpretations of ethnic and regional identity. Regional and local census and statistical information was collected from the Ayuntamientos (town halls) of Rioja Alavesa and from government offices in Vitoria, the capital of the autonomous Basque community. I also clipped newspaper articles on topics related to the research questions on a nearly daily basis. To understand more fully the policies and programs of the Basque government which affected the wine industry and education in Rioja Alavesa, I conducted a number of interviews with regional and local government officials and administrators. I also spoke with local leaders such as mayors, priests, agricultural extension agents, journalists, teachers and businessmen.

Throughout the fieldwork period, I continued participant observation. It was through this method that I gained the most insight into local perceptions and expressions of changing identity. But, in order to understand identity as it emerges, these data had to be integrated with the materials gathered from the other

sources. The following discussion of the organization of the dissertation will further describe the integration of the various kinds of data used in this exploratory research.

### Organization of the Dissertation

The organization of the dissertation reflects the research strategy and foci used in exploring contexts of identity in Rioja Alavesa. In Chapter II, I seek to clarify the theoretical framework of the study. In many ways, the results of this research challenge established theories regarding the nature of ethnic units and ethnic mobilization. Since it addresses issues of "emergent" ethnicity, and the microprocesses of identity formation at the community level, the case does not neatly fit most prescribed theoretical frameworks for explaining and describing ethnic identity. In the theory chapter, I discuss theoretical and conceptual formulations to which this case is an exception, as well as more recent theories which help explain what is happening in Rioja Alavesa.

In Chapters Three and Four, I establish the historical framework for understanding the processes of identity formation in Rioja Alavesa. In Chapter Three, I describe the history of the zone and its status as a borderland. I then relate Rioja Alavesa to the evolution of Basque nationalism which took place mostly in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. In Chapter Four, I discuss how the geography of the Ebro Valley was conducive to the development of the wine

industry there, and summarize the political economic history of the Riojan wine industry. In subsequent chapters, I focus on the ideological and ethnographic aspects of both Basque identity and identity with the wine complex in Rioja Alavesa.

Chapter Five serves as a transitional chapter between the historical and the ethnographic sections of the dissertation. In this chapter, I compare and contrast the scholarly and political interpretations and representations of Basque and Riojan identities with local folk interpretations. I also discuss the patterns of interaction between inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa and northern Basques which have served to distinguish, rather than to unite, these groups. In the remaining chapters, I focus on the three contexts of identity important to locals--viti-viniculture, pueblo, and language--and explore the processes of identity maintenance and change in them.

In Chapter Six, I discuss the viti-vinicultural lifeway in the Riojas. As noted, the ecological niche and lifeways associated with the wine complex are shared with neighbors across the Ebro River and contribute to many Rioja Alaveses' perceptions of themselves as "Riojanos." However, political administrative divisions have meant differential policies and benefits to wine growers on either side of the river. Now, since the regional autonomous communities are emphasizing regional identities and boundaries, both the



Basque and Riojan authorities are making efforts to appropriate the symbols of the wine culture of the Riojas as part of the identity of the respective autonomous communities. Both the identity based on the viti-vinicultural lifeway, and how it is being influenced by the recent political divisions, are discussed in this chapter.

Although I have distinguished three "contexts of identity" for analysis, these contexts are interrelated. For example, identity with the wine-grape complex is closely related to pueblo level identity in the Riojas. Inhabitants of each pueblo proclaim they make the best wine, have the best workers, etc. Therefore, a discussion of the relation of identity with the viti-vinicultural lifeway and pueblo identity leads into Chapter Seven, which focuses on pueblo level identity.

I found pueblo-level identity to be the most compelling context of group identity in Rioja Alavesa. In Chapter Seven, I explore how a Basque identity is intersecting pueblo identity differentially in the two pueblos where I did most of the ethnographic fieldwork. Inter-pueblo stereotypes, local politics and pueblo ritual are discussed as both expressions of pueblo identity and as exemplifying identity change. Pueblo identity also related to differential acceptance of the learning of the Basque language in the public schools, which is addressed in Chapter Eight.

Linguistic identity and educational policies were major concerns of many people in Rioja Alavesa. In Chapter Eight, I examine the introduction of the Basque language of Euskera, mostly through the school system, to Rioja Alavesa. The 1978 Spanish Constitution calls for the maintenance of, and instruction in, the regional languages of Spain, and assigns the articulation and implementation of language policies to the regional governmental authorities. The constitution of the autonomous Basque community requires that Basque be taught in all public schools. Parents can select between bilingual programs and schools where Euskera is taught only as a language subject. Certification in Euskera is also required for some posts in the regional government. Euskera had not been spoken in Rioja Alavesa since approximately the thirteenth century (Merino Urrutia 1975), but children there started learning the language in the late 1970s.

Today, through the educational system, some children have become fluent in Euskera, although it is a language largely of the school and rarely used in the home or streets. These children, by acquiring what has become probably the primary "marker" of contemporary Basque identity, identify themselves more as Basques than their parents, grandparents and siblings who do not know the language. Language represents the extension of a recognized, primordial Basque trait into the zone and

provides inhabitants with a distinguishing marker, if largely symbolic, not shared by their neighbors across the Ebro. In Chapter Eight I explore reactions to, and consequences of, the introduction of Euskera to Rioja Alavesa in light of various sociolinguistic theories about planning for language revival.

In the final chapter, I integrate the findings discussed in each chapter and relate my research to the relevant literature. Hypotheses regarding processes of ethnic identity formation are offered.

CHAPTER 2  
A REVIEW OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR  
ANALYSIS OF ETHNIC IDENTITY IN RIOJA ALAVESA

In this chapter, I seek to clarify the ideas and theories which inform this research. This project was designed as an exploratory investigation of identity maintenance and change in a particular context, a border zone, at a particular point in time, 1977 - 1987. For the people of Rioja Alavesa, who live at the frontier of the Basque Country, Spain's post-Franco transformation to a democratic government generates different options for ethnic and regional affiliation.

The study raised issues of ethnic unit definition, of the political mobilization of ethnic groups, and of the effects of ethnic mobilization on diverse sectors within ethnic groups. The intersections of various levels of identity, especially the local, the regional, the ethnic, and the national are explored. The theoretical debates about these issues have contributed to understanding and interpreting the case of Rioja Alavesa.

Formulating the Research Project

In the summer of 1985 I had the opportunity to work in Spain, assisting anthropologists Allan Burns and Anthony

Oliver-Smith of the University of Florida with a study of regional identity in the autonomous community of Rioja. During the four months of that study, I lived in several villages in Rioja and carried out participant observation and interviews which contributed to our understandings of the complexities of identity in Rioja. We focused on intra-regional variation rather than on Rioja's relations with neighboring provinces and regions. We aimed to evaluate the effects of the newly established Riojan autonomous government on the identity of different sub-regions within the autonomous community. I made only passing visits to the villages of Rioja Alavesa in the province of Alava, and the research questions explored in this dissertation were not framed until my return to Gainesville.

In discussions with Dr. Oliver-Smith about our Riojan study and my interests in ethnic movements stemming from prior research in the Western Isles of Scotland, he suggested an investigation of border identity and Basque ethnicity in Rioja Alavesa. He had conducted interviews in a village in Rioja Alavesa and had some exposure to the issues of Basque identity in the area. Thus, the original idea for the project is his. The case posed intriguing questions for an identity study, as well as providing an opportunity for comparison with earlier Scottish research.

My initial interest in ethnicity grew from research for my master's thesis in the Western Isles of

Scotland. I went to the Western Isles in 1981 with plans to study the Harris tweed industry. I was unaware of an "ethnic mobilization" movement which had begun on the islands in 1976 with the reorganization of Scottish regional authorities and the creation of a regional government on the islands. With the installation of the new government, many native Islanders with professional degrees returned to work in the islands and to spearhead programs promoting economic and cultural revival. Implementation of these programs was evident throughout the islands and I altered my research focus to explore these processes (Hendry 1983, 1984, 1989).

Like the subregion of Rioja Alavesa, the Western Isles demonstrate the diversity to be found within ethnic groups often discussed as homogeneous in macro-level analyses; e.g. the "Scots", the "Basques". Both cases reveal the heterogeneity of such gross ethnic units, but each case provoked different questions. The Western Islanders were implementing programs and policies to distinguish themselves even from mainland Scots, while the people of Rioja Alavesa face choices about whether to participate in the wider ethnic identity of being Basque.

Although the Western Islanders considered themselves distinct from mainland Scots, the islands serve, in a sense, as the symbolic "heartland" of Scottish identity, the last living outpost of Gaelic language and culture. The inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa, in contrast, live on the

periphery of the Basque region. They do not share in the traditional "markers" of Basque identity typified by the rural settlements of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and northern Navarra; and by maintenance of the Basque language. In contrast, in the Western Isles, the ethnic ideology was based on the culture and language of the islands. Therefore, Rioja Alavesa posed more challenging problems for research. Both cases support recent recommendations from scholars (Linz 1980, Grillo 1980, Nagel 1986, Cohen 1978) to explore diversity and complexity within ethnic groups.

In Scotland, I analyzed how the islanders' traditional lifeways of weaving, fishing, and crofting, as well as their natal Gaelic language, took on increasing symbolic significance in island leaders' efforts to foster pride in, and solidarity with, an island identity. This was a movement instigated on the islands, by and for islanders. Much of the initial impetus for promoting a Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa came from outside the zone, in the form of programs and policies of the government of the autonomous Basque community. Rioja Alaveses' participation in the post-Franco invigoration of Basque identity promotes reconsideration of what it means to be a Basque. Both the Scottish and Basque cases provide examples of ethnic identity evolving through historical circumstances. Both cases prompt questions regarding the definition of ethnic

units and the interrelations of local and ethnic identities with wider contexts.

Although the work in Scotland has influenced my choice of a dissertation topic, this current study is not a comparison of the two very different cases, but rather, an examination of Rioja Alavesa to delineate processes of identity change there. This is a necessary preliminary to more in-depth comparative analysis. This study raises theoretical and methodological questions for the anthropological study of the variety of groups we label as "ethnic".

#### Anthropological Perspectives on the Ethnicity Concept

Anthropologists have traditionally depicted ethnic and cultural units as fixed and bounded entities, distinguished by identifiable cultural markers. Cohen (1978) notes that previously, cultural anthropologists were not unaware of diversity within groups they studied, but that the focus of their work was not aimed towards analysis of such diversity:

...many of us were led by theoretical concerns to underplay the multiethnic quality of the societies we studied and chose one dominant ethnic group as our main focus...Where this was not the case, as with Leach's (1954) work on Highland Burma or in studies of modern interactions in multiethnic societies, such works were in a sense peripheral to the traditional thrust of the discipline. This was, in effect, to understand assumedly homogeneous sociocultural units as entities, the relations of their parts to one another and to the whole, and the relation of the whole and its parts to their physical and sociocultural environments. (Cohen 1978:381)



Studies such as Leach's, which focused on issues of multi-ethnicity, were in the minority throughout the 1940s and 1950s and into the 1960s. Social interactions and culture patterns were perceived as coming in "sufficiently convenient and durable territorial packages to be suitable for both standard fieldwork (by a single ethnographer) and comparative study" (Levine and Campbell 1972:84).

In the last two and a half decades, anthropologists and other scholars have been increasingly concerned with how ethnic groups are defined, and by whom. The focus has also shifted from viewing the groups we study as functional isolates to examining their interrelationships with other sectors and institutions. The 1964-65 Narroll-Moerman debate highlighted the controversy about defining ethnic groups. Narroll (1964) defended a need for "objective" definitions of units in order to carry out cross-cultural surveys. He proposed language, territorial contiguity and political organization as the three main criteria to be used in delimiting culture-bearing units (Narroll 1964: 732). Moerman (1965), on the other hand, used subjective criteria in his research on the Lue tribes of Northern Thailand and found that the self-categorizations of the Lue did not neatly coincide with linguistic, territorial and political boundaries. He argued that the demarcation of mutually exclusive "culture-bearing units" is problematic because individuals, communities and areas can change their

identification and because not all neighboring peoples recognize the same features as distinctive for ethnic classification. Narroll proposed etic analytical categories for defining units for cross-cultural analysis while Moerman favored analysis of emic views of self-categorization. Mitchell (1974) points out that Narroll and Moerman use different epistemological bases to define ethnicity. He defines "common sense" or "folk" notions as those used by the actors themselves and analytic models as those formulated by scholars who study ethnic groups. Instead of an either/or argument, Mitchell contends that both perspectives are valuable.

Barth's (1969) influential edited volume, Ethnic Groups and Boundaries, is often cited as the turning point in anthropology's evolution from functional to processual conceptions of ethnicity. Barth emphasized the interactive aspects of ethnicity:

Ethnic groups are formed largely to the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and others for purposes of interaction. (1969:11)

He deemed the conscious boundaries formed by a group to distinguish themselves from other groups to be the key element in determining ethnic identity, rather than the cultural content within the boundary. Analysis of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa provides an excellent test case for debates about defining ethnic groups. Here, the expansion of an ethnic identity to a group who have not

shared in the markers which have traditionally defined Basques necessitates consideration of both scholarly and folk perspectives of Basque identity. In line with Barth, it may not be cultural content, but rather peoples' perception of the boundary dividing them from neighbors, that is the determinant of ethnic membership in Rioja Alavesa.

Anthropology's growing sensitivity to the subjective nature of much ethnic group identification requires that the concept not "be glossed over by a naming convention or a set of coding techniques" (Cohen 1978: 383). Confusion over ethnic labels can actually serve as a key to understanding the evolution of social-cultural differences. For example, the question of who is called Basque is puzzling in Rioja Alavesa today. Are inhabitants Basque because they live within the political boundary of the autonomous Basque community? Must they learn the Basque language to become "more" Basque? Does support of a Basque political party promote a Basque "ethnic" identity? How will the ideology of Basque identity be adapted to incorporate diverse populations such as the inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa? Rioja Alavesa's recent integration into the autonomous Basque community provides an opportunity for study and analysis of processes of identity maintenance, change and reinterpretation as they occur.

In addition to debates regarding the nature of ethnic units, anthropologists are increasingly aware of the interrelationships and interdependence of the groups they study with wider political, economic and social orders. This awareness has been fostered by political events such as the attainment of political independence from colonial powers during the 1950s and 1960s by many "third world" countries. Defining national and ethnic identities and territories became issues of sometimes violent consequence for many of the people formerly studied as isolated groups by anthropologists (Cohen 1978, Asad 1988).

Interstate and intrastate conflict provoked by politically organized ethnic groups in recent decades has motivated social scientists to analyze the political problematics of ethnic groups (Rothschild 1981). In addition to ethnic mobilization in developing countries, the emergence of ethnic movements in the "first world" since the 1960s by groups thought to have assimilated has also contributed to scholarly reconsideration of the ethnicity concept. In North America and Western Europe, for example, the politicization of such groups as Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics in the United States; native peoples and French Canadians in Canada; the Celtic peoples of Great Britain; Basques, Galicians, and Catalans in Spain, Bretons in France, etc. necessitates new perspectives and frameworks for analysis. Connor reports

that nearly half of the independent countries of the world have been troubled by some degree of "ethnically inspired dissonance," sometimes accompanied by violence, in recent years (Connor 1973:1). These events do not match theories which predicted modernization would foster assimilation.

Weber expected that the growth of rationalized national bureaucracies which accompanied industrialization would serve as homogenizing forces. Marx viewed ethnic alliances as archaic forms which would impede class organization. He predicted a growing politicization of the proletariat and corresponding decline of ethnic solidarity with the spread of capitalism (Bogdanor 1982: 285). However, some of the most recent examples of the resurgence of ethnic nationalism have occurred in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The "break-up" of Communist Party hegemony has been accompanied by the splintering into ethnic units in both the Eastern block and the Soviet Union since 1989. These events further illustrate the need for an analytic framework which views ethnicity as processual and contextual.

#### From Ethnic Group to Ethnic Nation

Analyses as to how and why ethnic groups mobilize and politicize must necessarily be concerned with how ethnic groups are defined and with their interrelationships with the wider order. To contend for resources, privileges, increased autonomy or independence, ethnic groups must interact with larger political, economic and social sectors.

The group often negotiates and competes with other groups within a nation-state and with officials of the nation-state. Ethnic members must delimit the boundaries of the group, and in the process, adjustments may be made in definitions of the ethnic group "unit". Political mobilization of an ethnic group requires the formation of an ideology as well as organizational capacities for participation (Nielsson 1985:28). Since cultural markers are used in drafting an ethnic ideology at the same time the group participates in the contemporary political arena, ethnic groups are, in a sense, simultaneously primordial and modern (Rothschild 1981:30). Since politicized ethnic groups participate in national and international political arenas, the terms "state", "nation", "nation-state", and "ethnic nation" should be clarified.

The "state" and "ethnicity" are much older phenomena than the "nation-state," a comparatively modern form of political organization which emerged in Europe in the last two to three centuries, and in formerly colonized areas such as Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, much more recently (Worsley 1984: 245). The "state" is a juridical concept relating a governing body to a social group or groups within a defined territory. It is a centralized, political authority (Tiryakian and Nevitte 1985: 58). In contrast, the characteristics connoted by an "ethnic group include common racial identity, culture (including language and

religion), kinship, social customs, history, and stable geographic contiguity" (Nielsson 1985:27).

The concepts of nation and nationalism have been understudied and difficult to define and analyze (Worsley 1984, Anderson 1983). Yet nation-ness has become the most universally legitimate political unit of our time (Anderson 1983). The nation contrasts to the state in that citizens of nations are purported to share a common culture and values. Leaders of nations attempt to reinforce national boundaries by using socially constructed categories such as race and language to delineate the nation-group (Tiryakian and Nevitte 1985: 61). In Anderson's provocative treatise on the topic, he defines a nation as "an imagined community":

It is an imagined community because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (Anderson 1983:15)

Anderson associates the first emergence of nations in eighteenth century Europe to the decline of the two previous main frames of reference of group solidarity: the religious community and the dynastic realm. The rise of secular capitalism influenced the transition to the "nation" as a new frame of reference for meeting psychological and economic needs of "belonging" (Anderson 1983). The invention of the printing press and expansion of literacy allowed for the dissemination of ideas and information which

encouraged individuals who did not know each other to feel a part of the same "imagined community" (Smith 1986:10). The electronic media developed in the twentieth century has also been used to promote nationalist sentiment. A number of theorists agree with Anderson's linkage of the rise of nations and nationality to modernity (Gellner 1983, Worsley 1984, Smith 1986).

The concept of "nation-state," then, implies a centralized political authority where, in most cases, a dominant ethnic group attempts to impose cultural hegemony, based on its own "subculture," as a means of consolidating political power. This is the process of "nation building" that was carried out, for example, by Castile in Spain, Paris in France, England in Great Britain. Thus, nation-states may be, and most often are, multiethnic. Ethnic group boundaries do not necessarily, or even usually, coincide with nation-state boundaries. The seven Basque provinces, for example, are divided by the political boundary separating the French and Spanish nation-states.

Many of the same processes used in nation-building, such as idealization of past history, language and culture, are used by politically mobilizing ethnic groups (Smith 1986). The description of "nation" can also be applied to ethnic groups with political aims of forming independent or autonomous states. In Europe, then, there are the "old nations" within nation-states, such as the "member nations"



of Great Britain, Brittany in France, the Basque and Catalan "nations" of Spain. Especially in the last twenty years, these groups have been mobilizing along ethnic lines in bids for increased political and economic resources from the centralized authorities of the nation-states. The transition of "ethnic group" to "ethnic nation" is examined in this study. The historical contexts which fostered the politicization of the Basque ethnic group will be analyzed. Demarcating the boundaries and defining the distinguishing characteristics of the ethnic nation become complicated in a case such as Rioja Alavesa, where the population does not share the same cultural repertoire as other Basques.

It should be kept in mind that politicized ethnic nationalism is but one form and level of ethnic organization. Worsley notes that many socially significant identities are involuntary, ascribed by powerful others for purposes of exploitation and control, rather than the chosen identities of ethnic members used to politicize and promote the group. Maintenance of distinct ethnic identities has been a much used "divide and rule" tactic by powerful others. But ethnic identity has also been used by ethnic members as a "mode of resistance" (Worsley 1984: 245-246).

No single theory answers the whys of the persistence or resurgence of such sub-national ethnic groups as the Basques, although two main explanations predominate in the literature. Proponents of "instrumental" interpretations

posit that awareness of economic, cultural and political deprivation of the ethnic group motivates ethnic leaders to mobilize to procure more equitable status, political participation, and access to power and resources (Muga 1984, McCrone 1971, Esman 1977, Rawkins 1979, Rokkan and Unwin 1983, Hechter 1975). Those favoring "primordial" explanations view ethnic movements as motivated by a need to counter anomie and alienation in the homogenizing, industrial world--a return to *Gemeinschaft* and *communitas* (da Silva 1975, Beer 1980, Mayo 1974, Hobsbawm 1972). Douglass (1988), Bentley (1987), Smith (1984, 1986) and Keyes (1981) contend that these two interpretations should not be viewed as mutually exclusive--the complexity of ethnic groups and movements requires consideration of both instrumental and primordial factors.

The Basque case provides an exception to either a strictly instrumentalist or primordialist interpretation (da Silva 1975, Heiberg 1975, Douglass 1988). At the end of the nineteenth century, the Spanish Basques were not a poor and exploited peripheral region, but one of the wealthiest areas of the country. Catalonia was also one of the richest regions of the country. Both the Basques and Catalans have felt economically exploited in the sense that they estimate their tax contributions to the national government exceed the central government's return to these regions. But explanations of economic deprivation as the primary

motivating force for ethnic nationalism are questionable in both cases. In the following chapter, I detail the historical circumstances leading to the emergence of the Basque nationalist movement, and propose both instrumental and primordial motivations of ethnic leaders. Also, in taking a diachronic perspective on the evolution of an ethnic group, changes in motivation and ideology are perceptible. For example, the basically conservative, middle class Basque nationalist movement of 1894 has diversified, and today includes a variety of Basque nationalists with varying political agendas (Douglass 1988).

Bentley posits that both primordial and instrumental models which attempt to explain an ethnic movement as a whole often fail to examine the microprocesses by which collectivities come into existence. The construction of sensations of likeness and difference needs to be accounted for (Bentley 1987:26-27). Similarly, A. D. Smith proposes the need to examine shifting boundary perceptions as ethnic groups evolve. This processual view of ethnic movements is relevant to the examination of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa. Numerous scholars (Wolf 1984, Greenwood 1977, A.D. Smith 1986, Spicer 1971, Connor 1977, Levine and Campbell 1972, Paredes 1980, Stein and Rokkan 1983, Pi-Sunyer 1985) insist that a careful consideration of the significance of historical events in shaping ethnic identity and ethnic movements is vital for the interpretation and understanding

of them. Instead of relying on a single nomothetic theory to explain all aspects of ethnic nationalism, the various models can be used in guiding exploration, rather than in pre-formulating explanations. Each case of ethnic mobilization presents a different weighing and combination of causal factors.

The case of Rioja Alavesa prompts a need to examine the "microprocesses" of ethnic mobilization because of the area's distinction from the Basque heartland. The incorporation of Rioja Alavesa into the autonomous Basque community requires a rethinking of boundaries and criteria for Basque group membership. It is precisely because Rioja Alavesa fails to fit neatly into a bounded categorization of Basque identity that the area is a good one for studying processes of ethnic nation building. Will the political boundary dividing the autonomous communities of the Basque Country and Rioja eventually foster a Basque ethnic identity on the Alava side of the Ebro River, and an increase in feelings of distinction from fellow inhabitants of the Rioja wine district who live across the river?

#### Internal Diversity of Ethnic Groups

Although analysts are more cognizant of the need to understand emic perceptions of ethnic identity, there is still a dearth of attention given to the frequent diversity within groups defined as "ethnic". Even scholars who recognize the processual, contextual nature of ethnic

identity often refer to the group as sharing a repertoire of the same cultural markers which may be "latent", or used in mobilization efforts. For example, although Rothschild provides an insightful analysis of the politicization of ethnicity, he nonetheless assumes ethnic group members share basic traits:

It is, of course, true that certain cultural or physical markers, such as language, religion, pigmentation, or tribal membership are primordial in the sense that people acquire them before they acquire more explicitly economic or political identities, self-perceptions, and allegiances. But initially these markers are simply the assumed givens of life, not in themselves sufficient (though necessary) to mobilize those who share them into self-conscious groups that will be internally cohesive and externally competitive. Such mobilization occurs when these given cultural markers are infused with an intense, differentiating value, are elevated into an ethnic ideology. (Rothschild 1981: 26-27)

However, not all inhabitants who live in an ethnic territory necessarily share equally in the heritage of cultural markers used in formulating an ethnic ideology. Within any ethnic group, there may be "core" and "peripheral" ethnic members. As Grillo (1980) warns:

"We" utterances must be treated as partial statements of claims rather than as descriptions of reality which prevail at all levels. (1980:13)

Linz is also cognizant of the need for awareness of heterogeneity of groups labelled "ethnic":

The subject of different cultural and/or political aspirations is generally left undefined by the use of generic expressions like the Basques or the Welsh, or of terms like the Basque nation, people, ethnic group, and so on. Little effort is made to define more precisely who is meant by those terms, what distinguishing characteristics are used to include

someone in those categories, and how to verify the degree to which such a collective entity is a reality, experienced as such by its assumed members. (Linz 1985:203)

Linz (1985) and others (Clark 1985, Greenwood 1977, Heiberg 1980, Caro Baroja 1986) have described heterogeneity among Basques. Immigrants from other regions of Spain have settled in Basque industrial areas. Rural and urban Basque orientations have historically differed (Heiberg 1989). Adherents to various Basque political parties espouse differing political and cultural ideologies. In addition, people of border zones such as Rioja Alavesa have a cultural heritage distinct from native Basques of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. This diversity makes a generic Basque label and identity problematic. Linz comments:

If we were to combine primordial characteristics, subjective identity, and politically conscious Basque nationalism, those satisfying all three criteria would be a very small minority of the population. (1985: 244)

While awareness of this diversity is necessary for recognition of the complexities of Basque identity, such diversity does not falsify or negate processes of change and reinterpretation of the ethnic identity. Although not all inhabitants of the Basque community share all of the "primordial" features which have been promulgated as identifying Basques, this does not mean that the Basque nation is being "invented" where one did not exist. Following Anderson's (1983) thesis on nationalism, nation building involves creative processes which bind people in

the "imagined community" of the nation. The current phase of Basque nation building is still too new to conclude whether the diverse groups who live in the Spanish Basque autonomous community will reach a consensus about criteria for "belonging" to this Basque community. Research in the border zone of Rioja Alavesa revealed that criteria for Basque identity are under negotiation. A Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa was being debated among locals themselves, between locals and Basque leaders, and between locals and non-Basque neighbors.

For an ethnic group to successfully compete as a political force, larger units are advantageous and it may therefore become expedient to organize around larger scale identities. Widening the boundaries of ethnic group membership helps account for the apparent sociological paradox wherein "ethnic groups can appear to be rapidly losing their cultural distinctiveness (while) also emphasizing and exaggerating their cultural identity and exclusiveness" (Nagel 1986:94). Amalgamation of linguistically, religiously, culturally and geographically diverse groups into larger-scale ethnic entities is exemplified by organizations of Native Americans and Hispanics in the United States (Ibid.). But amalgamation does not necessarily mean the loss of internal diversity-- ethnic subgroups can present a united front to outsiders for

political reasons, while still recognizing internal differences.

In analyzing why ethnicity is becoming a favored organizational strategy in competitive economic and political relations in the modern world, the role and influence of state level political organization in legitimating ethnicity in modern states must be considered. Basically, official recognition of ethnicity often serves to increase it. Several mechanisms can contribute to this process. For example, the imposition of administrative or electoral boundaries around a segment of the population can reinforce extant communal differences as well as create new ones (Nagel 1986:99). This argument is pertinent to the case of Rioja Alavesa since the change to democratic government has resulted in recognition of Vizcaya, Alava and Guipúzcoa as a distinct political entity by the Spanish government. The geographic and electoral boundary of this officially recognized Basque community incorporates Rioja Alavesa.

Policies which recognize and institutionalize ethnic differences within a state are also likely to promote ethnic mobilization. For example, a policy of multiple official languages fosters maintenance of ethnic languages (Nagel 1986: 103-104). Spain's 1978 constitution recognizes the legitimacy of the Basque, Catalan and Galician languages. The autonomous governments have been granted powers to



institute bilingual education programs and to declare the regional language co-official with Spanish. For Rioja Alavesa, this policy has meant the introduction of the Basque language of Euskera to the zone.

In addition to the delineation of administrative boundaries, forced migration and allocation of land (such as American Indian reservations) affect ethnic identity. Other policies which may emphasize ethnic identity include those which single out particular ethnic groups for special treatment--either negative treatment such as internment or deportation, or positive treatment such as Affirmative Action in the United States. Cohen (1978) has also noted how the positive recognition and legitimation of ethnic categories by state governments can foster ethnic organization:

Democratic theory and ideology have shifted to include both individual and group rights. In this sense, ethnicity has been legitimized in political theory, making it a means not only of anti-alienative, diffuse identity but also a means of asserting one's rights in a political community in which ethnicity is a recognized element. This being so, ethnicity is not just a conceptual tool. It also reflects an ideological position claiming recognition for ethnicity as a major sector in complex societies. (Cohen 1978: 402)

The mobilization of Basque ethnicity in an area such as Rioja Alavesa can be related to the democratization of Spanish state government and consequent legitimation of the Basque Country as an autonomous community. As the ethnic charter is extended to and interpreted by diverse groups,

the bases of Basque ethnic identity will be affected. The ethnic ideology of what it means to be a Basque may show a decreased emphasis on "primordial" traits such as race and ancestry and a greater focus on "territoriality", meaning one can become Basque by living and working in the Basque Country (Linz 1980). Heiberg (1980) posits a change in emphasis from race and language to "patriotism" in defining Basqueness. Urla (1987) considers that the focus on race and genealogy in distinguishing Basques used by early Basque nationalists is being superseded by an emphasis on the Basque language as a primary marker of Basque identity today. Both patriotism and language may be acquired, making a Basque identity based on these traits more accessible to a wider population. Institutionalized benefits, such as posts in the Basque government which require certification in Euskera, also promote the extension of this identity marker to the wider population.

The expansion of Basque identity, however, does not equate to a homogenization of identity among previously different groups. The ethnic identity is most likely to be contextualized through more potent local level identities. This dissertation is largely concerned with documenting the effects of the recent invigoration of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa on peoples' more entrenched identification of themselves as members of the wine growing region of the Rioja, and, as members of individual pueblos.

Ethnic Identity and Local Identity

Thus far, this discussion has largely dealt with abstract theories and concepts. The aim of the study, however, is to relate the theories and concepts to concrete communities and individuals. I want to explore the significance of ethnic mobilization in people's daily lives. Anthropology's method of extended participation and observation in communities is well suited to this objective.

While the strength of anthropology has been its focus on the micro, the discipline nonetheless needs to connect the micro and the macro. In studying processes of nationalism from a community perspective, the anthropologist can delineate and relate the different levels of identity involved. Such analysis is crucial, Grillo posits, since local and supra-local interests may not coincide:

"Our" incorporation within an identity, and the establishment and protection of a boundary between "Us" and "Them" are political activities involving many divergent interests which may have different meaning at various levels of social organization. (Grillo 1980:14)

Ethnic identification does not neutralize or eliminate all other affiliations, orientations, or differentiations. Rather, these other identities can interact with ethnicity (Rothschild 1981:8). For example, some grape growers in Rioja Alavesa begin to distinguish themselves as Basque grape growers, perceiving their product and work ethic superior to those of grape growing neighbors across the Ebro. Some pueblos in Rioja Alavesa show more enthusiasm

for a Basque identity, such as greater encouragement of the learning of Euskera, and more support for Basque political parties, than other pueblos. An understanding of the relation of local and ethnic identities reveals how people in the zone are differentially adapting and adopting Basque identity. The forces exerted from the central state, nation state, or ethnic nation do not result in a "cultural monolith." Failure to consider local level identities glosses the complexities of "belonging." Local experience mediates national identity (Cohen 1982).

To begin to interpret Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa, it was crucial to understand how people grouped and distinguished themselves at other levels. Identity with the geographic wine district of Rioja, and identity with the local pueblos, were the most common ways people in Rioja Alavesa established "we"-"them" boundaries. My aim was to then relate how these local levels of identity intersect with "grosser" levels, and in particular, how a Basque ethnic identity affects and is affected by the local milieus. Adoption of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa may be a selective, strategic choice for presentation of self to outsiders in some contexts--it does not necessarily substitute for, negate, or oppose other levels of identity, especially of complex, deep-rooted community level identities.

The border status of Rioja Alavesa further complicates identity issues. Nagel's contention that official recognition of political administrative boundaries serves to promote identity within those boundaries is applicable to Rioja Alavesa. Since Spain's establishment of the autonomous community governments from 1978 to 1983, both the Basque and Riojan autonomous governments have emphasized the political administrative boundary of the Ebro River as dividing cultural as well as administrative zones. The Ebro takes on a greater significance than it had as a provincial boundary--it now separates the autonomous communities of the Basque Country and Rioja.

#### Identity in Borderlands

The conception of the "frontier" as a firm line of demarcation between distinct linguistic and cultural groups having territorial sovereignty is a modern development which evolved as part of the ideology of European nation-state formation. Although most nation-state frontiers are the outcome of arbitrary political decision or military accident, such frontiers do acquire powerful meanings.

Leach notes:

...wars are fought to defend such frontiers and from such wars there has emerged a European myth which asserts, not only that every political state must, ipso facto, have a definite boundary, but also that the frontiers in question ought in some way to correspond with differences of language and culture. (Leach 1960:49)

Leach relates the establishment of state frontiers to processes of nation-building, but describes the frontier or border zone as an area "through which cultures interpenetrate in a dynamic manner," and which needs to be clearly distinguished from the precise lines of modern political geography. The frontier or border zone, then, is more likely to be a "gray" area of ambiguous identity, a transition zone between groups.

Some political geographers distinguish a boundary from a frontier by defining the boundary as a recognized demarcation line (Leach's "precise line of modern political geography") and the frontier as a zone (Prescott 1978). Geographers recognize two types of frontier zones: the area bordering the political boundary between two countries, or the division of settled and uninhabited parts of a country. Prescott considers the former type to be synonymous with a borderland, defined as the transition zone within which a political boundary line lies. Borderlands previously served as divisive areas between kingdoms, states, or territories before the establishment of formally measured boundary lines. Today, such zones have been replaced by internationally recognized boundary lines on all continents.

The frontier zone or borderland, however, persists as a transitional area after the delimitation of an officially recognized and agreed upon concrete boundary line. I use the term frontier and borderland interchangeably to

designate the transition zone dissected by a political boundary line. As discussed earlier, I also use the term boundary in the sense of cultural and ethnic boundaries which do not always coincide with political boundary lines. Once the political division between states or regions is established, this division influences the landscape of which it is a part because of the differential developments, regulations and policies of the separated states or other political entities (Prescott 1978: 30).

Political geographers have mostly been concerned with the study of international boundaries, but, the intra-national boundaries of nation-states also have significant impacts and deserve further research. The pattern of intra-national boundaries within a country may more directly affect the lives of citizens than international boundaries. Internal boundaries dividing such entities as states, regions, provinces, counties, etc. often determine the electorate in which one votes, how property is assessed and taxed, the availability of schools, land use regulations, etc. In some countries, such as Canada, Nigeria and Uganda, intra-national boundaries have marked out ethnic areas which have fostered ethnic mobilization threatening to the stability of the nation state (Prescott 1978).

Several case studies which address issues of borderland identities in European communities emphasize the relevance of using the border zone to explore changes in ethnic and

cultural units through time. Wolf and Cole (1974) examined ethnic boundaries and loyalties in two communities of the South Tyrol region of Italy. The authors chose to study two neighboring villages in the Italian Tyrol, one Italian-speaking and one German-speaking. The villages belonged to different administrative provinces with differing policies regarding the powers of village government. Wolf and Cole concluded that although the villages shared an environmental niche, outside influences shaped different village identities:

We thus discovered, in the course of our study, a disjunction existing between the processes growing out of the local ecology and aspects of the local cultures that seemed to originate in their relationship to the "outside" world. We therefore were led to try to specify the characteristics of that world. (1974: 20)

In complex societies, Wolf and Cole argue, strict ecological interpretations of group identity are inadequate. The authors call for the need to understand how changes in wider economic and political systems affect the small communities anthropologists study.

While Wolf and Cole explored how different ethnic groups related within the Italian nation-state, historian Peter Sahlin (1989) examined the division of an ethnic group by a nation-state boundary. He studied processes of nation building at the community level by analyzing the effects of the creation of the political border between France and Spain on two Catalan villages in the Cerdanya valley of the Pyrenees. Although the Pyrenees were



established as a frontier zone between the nascent French and Spanish states in 1659, an official boundary line was not marked off until 1854 - 1868. Sahlins argues that although political boundaries may be the outcome of national political events, local social relations in the borderland determine the significance of the boundary line for the communities involved. He found that the people of Cerdanya were not passive subjects of larger forces of nation-building, but rather, dynamically engaged in them (Sahlins 1989: 8).

By examining local archives in neighboring villages on the French and Spanish sides of the valley, Sahlins found that, in the first two centuries after the division of the valley, the Cerdans used the respective Spanish and French national identities instrumentally, but that this process eventually affected their sense of who they were:

...over the course of two centuries, the Cerdans ended up convincing themselves of their affiliation to France or to Spain; their national disguises wound up "sticking to their skins." (1989: 269)

Although local identity and pride of place were not replaced by national identity, they were reinterpreted through it. This case provides another example of how an arbitrary political boundary may eventually foster distinct identities due to different administrative policies. .

Douglass (1977) and Gómez-Ibáñez (1975) have also studied the effects of the French-Spanish international boundary upon borderland populations in the Pyrenees.

Gómez-Ibáñez, a geographer, used the region as his unit of analysis to study the division of a Basque zone by the international boundary. He traced the ways in which life styles on each side of the frontier have increasingly differentiated since formalization of the border in 1659. The border has fostered a distinction between "French" and "Spanish" Basques due to the different political, economic and linguistic policies of each nation state (Gómez-Ibáñez 1975).

Douglass, an anthropologist, used the village as a unit of analysis to compare neighboring Basque communities adjoining the French-Spanish border (1977). Although Douglass agreed that the administrative division fostered differing national identities, he was interested in documenting how the communities on either side of the border were linked in many ways--through kinship and affinity, cultural exchange, land use agreements, and contraband activities. He demonstrates that the borderland status of these communities often stimulated contact between them and that this status promoted relationships distinct from those shared with non-border communities.

Sahlins (1989), Gómez-Ibáñez (1975) and Douglass (1977) have addressed the effects of an international border on the Catalans and Basques. All of the studies illustrate the borderland or frontier as a propitious setting for examining intersections of local, regional, ethnic, national, and

ethnic national identities, and for documenting how these identities change. Such studies also highlight the dynamic nature of the ethnic unit.

In Rioja Alavesa, the new administrative boundary of the autonomous Basque community is fostering extension and reformulation of Basque identity in the zone. The processes of nation-building, involving the idea of the congruence of cultural identity and territorial sovereignty, apply in this case to the politicization of the ethnic nation. Differing policies of the Basque and Riojan autonomous communities foster distinction between inhabitants on either side of the Ebro River boundary, although they share a landscape and lifeway.

The contexts for defining and delimiting ethnic units in Spain entered a period of rapid change after Franco's death. To investigate these processes in Rioja Alavesa, it was necessary to formulate a research design which would enable me to comprehend, describe and interpret "change-in-the-making." This approach necessitates a diachronic perspective. Therefore, before presenting the ethnographic data, the next two chapters are devoted to describing the evolution of Basque ethnic identity and Rioja Alavesa's distance from it, as well as the development of the Riojan wine industry, which has greatly influenced regional identity in Rioja and Rioja Alavesa.

CHAPTER 3  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF RIOJA ALAVESA AS A BORDERLAND AND ITS  
RELATION TO THE EVOLUTION OF BASQUE NATIONALISM

An understanding of the historical processes which have shaped the development of Basque nationalism, and the position of the Riojas as a borderland, is essential for interpreting the current status of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa. The evolution of the Spanish Basques from "ethnic group" to "ethnic nation" resulted not from the Basques' isolation from outside influences, but rather, from their interactions with other groups. The policies of the Spanish state since 1492 have significantly influenced the shape of modern Basque nationalism and Basque ideology. Even prior to the unification of Catholic Spain, the various racial and cultural groups which ruled and contested the Iberian peninsula had profound effects on Basques, and on the cultural divergence of Alava and southern Navarra from Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa.

A critical element to consider in relating a group's history to the group's identity is the use of historical interpretation to support an ethnic or regional identity (Heiberg 1989, Zulaika 1988, Grillo 1980). Due to the variety of peoples who influenced the Riojas, the

comparative influence of one group over another can be emphasized in defending a particular identity for the area. Various interpretations of the history of Rioja Alavesa, by both scholars and locals themselves, will be discussed in Chapter Five. If ethnic identity is partly based on descent from common ancestral roots, historical interpretation can help to explain these connections. For border zones such as the Rioja Alavesa, descent from any particular racial or ethnic group is open to debate.

Rioja Alavesa: Evolution of a Borderland to 1492

Gonzalez de Herrero notes the diverse background of the Riojas:

The fluctuating character of this region is a fact inherited from remote times: the Rioja has been the place of settlement and passage of very distinct peoples whose characteristics have been mixed and superimposed. (Gonzalez de Herrero 1977: 146)

Southern Navarra and the Ebro Valley were more open to outside influences and to the development of town life through the Middle Ages than the mountainous zones of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and northern Alava and northern Navarra (Collins 1986).

Even in prehistoric times, different tribal groups lived in the area of the autonomous community of Rioja and Rioja Alavesa. The Berones, of Celtic origin, are thought to have been the most numerous (Pérez Arrondo 1982, Merino Urrutia 1975), while the Pelendones, another Celtic group, probably lived there also, alongside Vascones and Vardulos,

two groups considered ancestral to the Basques. Palacios (1978) posits that Vardulos mainly inhabited Rioja Alavesa, while Pérez Arrondo (1982) believes the Vardulos lived north of the Cantabrian mountains which separate Rioja Alavesa from the rest of Alava. These interpretations reflect Palacios' support of a Basque identity for Rioja Alavesa, and Perez Arrondo's de-emphasis of Basque influence in the geographic zone of the Riojas. The names for these tribal groupings were first recorded by the Romans, and we cannot be certain what criteria they used in distinguishing the groups (Garcia de Cortazar et al. 1984). It is also debated whether Euskera was spoken by any of the prehistoric peoples of the Riojas (Merino Urrutia 1975, Echenique Elizondo 1987).

By the last third of the second century, B.C., the Riojas had been subdued by the Romans. Beginning in 218 B.C., the Romans spent two centuries conquering the indigenous peoples of the Iberian peninsula. A major line of communication with the rest of the Empire was established with a trans-Pyrenean imperial highway which crossed the Basque lands. The Ebro also served as a main conduit for trade and travel. Although few towns of any significant size, outside of Pamplona and Calahorra, were established by the Romans in Basque areas, villa and small township sites have been identified throughout the contemporary Basque provinces. Roman influence in the valley zones was more

pervasive than in the northern mountains although there is evidence of Roman material remains in the north and of the economic and military interdependence of the valley and mountain areas. The Basque language was one of the few indigenous languages to survive the Roman occupation. In the valley zones, Euskera was probably subsumed in most of Alava and southern Navarra (Collins 1986).

Collins (1986), Palacios (1978) and Merino Urrutia (1975) agree to the likelihood that dialects of Euskera were spoken in the area of the contemporary Riojas in pre-Roman times. Collins places the southern border of the Basque lands at Calahorra, well inside the modern autonomous community of Rioja. He views the Basque-Roman relationship as interdependent, with assimilation and change occurring gradually between Romans and the indigenous peoples.

The introduction of Christianity also changed Basque culture. The valley areas came under Christian influence earlier than the mountain zones. A diocese in Calahorra has been documented for the end of the 4th century. At that time, the Christian poet, Prudentius, in a poem to the people of Calahorra, addressed the inhabitants as "Vascones," indication that the people of the area were considered Basque. A bishopric is documented for Pamplona in 589. But there is little evidence as to when the northern Basque zones were converted to Christianity, and

estimates range from the sixth to the twelfth centuries (Collins 1986:65).

In 409 A.D. Germanic tribes (Vandals, Sueves, Alans) invaded and mastered much of the Iberian peninsula. The Visigoths, another northern group, entered the peninsula in 416 as allies of the declining Roman Empire to subdue the other invaders. By 456, the Visigoths had wrested most of Iberia for themselves, establishing a capital in Toledo. From 466 to the 480s, they invaded the Ebro Valley. The Christianized Visigoths ruled for nearly three centuries (Collins 1986: 68-80).

By the time of the Visigoth rule, relations between the inhabitants of the valley towns of the Ebro and the mountain dwelling peoples to the north were strained. While Prudentius' had addressed the inhabitants of Calahorra as "Vascones" a century earlier, all references to the Vascones during the Visigoth period describe them as a dangerous rural population from the northern mountains. The Vascones of the valley zone are assumed to have assimilated by this time. The Visigoths were well established in the Ebro Valley, including Rioja Alavesa, and the Vascones were viewed as living north of this conquered territory. During the rule of the Visigoths, Vascones came to be a generic term used to signify all the Basque groups previously known by different tribal names (Collins 1986:78).



Although the Visigoths conquered territory north of the Ebro, including contemporary Rioja Alavesa, they never subdued all of the Basque zones. The Franks consolidated a kingdom east of the Pyrenees, and the northern Spanish Basque zones formed a frontier between the Visigoth and Frankish kingdoms. The Visigoths were defeated by the Moors in 711.

The "Moors," as the Spaniards called the Arabs, Syrians, Egyptians and Berbers who invaded from north Africa, made Spain the westernmost province of Islam, establishing a 700 year rule over most of the peninsula. They subdued the Ebro Valley around 717 and planned to cross the Pyrenees, but, due to internal divisions, gave up this quest during the 740s - 750s. Pamplona surrendered to the Moors around 718 and they may have used the city to launch their expeditions to the Pyrenees (Collins 1986: 116-119). The Moors conquered most of contemporary Galicia and Alava between 734 and 741, but their control of these areas was tenuous.

The Reconquest began from the small Christian kingdom in Asturias. Alfonso I, an Asturian king, reclaimed Alava, including parts of the Ebro Valley, by 742. The Moors never established a stable rule in Alava again, although they made numerous attempts. In both Christian and Arab chronicles, there are references to the Alavese territory as the scene of confrontations (Garcia de Cortazar et al. 1984:57). The

status of Rioja Alavesa during the Arab reign probably fluctuated. As one local historian writes: "In our historical march, in the tenth century, we were prey to the raids of the Arabs and served as the battle camp of the Christian Armies" (Tojal 1979:14). The Moors were firmly established in most of the contemporary autonomous community of Rioja south of the Ebro River. Their castles and forts dot the landscape and the Arab names of many villages attest to their presence (e.g. Alberite, Albelda, Abalos, Alfaro). Rioja Alavesa was at the very frontier, and probably often was the frontier, between the Christian and Moorish forces.

By 850, the Basques were ruled, if nominally, by three separate, sometimes mutually hostile monarchies; Asturian, Frankish and Pamplonese, in addition to the areas under Moorish control. There may have been some zones in less accessible pockets of Guipúzcoa and the Pyrenees that were untouched by outside political control, but Collins posits that "no sense of a common Basque identity seems to have existed as a counterweight to this political diversity" (Collins 1986: 139).

The independent realm of Pamplona was established by a family dynasty of Basque origin in 824 when Frankish forces who had captured the city were ousted. The development of this kingdom, later to become the Kingdom of Navarra, influenced the future of the Riojas and Rioja Alavesa. In 923, the Pamplonese king, Sancho Garces I, in cooperation

with the Leonese monarch, Ordoño II, gained Najera and Viguera from the Moors (see Figure 6). Najera became the alternate capital and preferred residence of the monarchs of Pamplona, who maintained close contact with their nearest neighbor, the kingdom of Leon in Castile.

An important revival of Christian intellectual culture in the Riojas and Castile evolved. A number of monasteries (e.g. San Millan de la Cogolla, San Martin de Albelda, Santa Mar de Najera and others) were founded or restored (see Figure 6). Inhabitants of surrounding settlements, including those of Rioja Alavesa, paid tributes and made pilgrimages to these Christian centers, located in what is now the autonomous community of Rioja. These building projects, as well as the comparative fertility of the Riojas, opened opportunities for substantial numbers of Basques from other areas to migrate to the Riojas under Navarrese rule. Basque presence, and the speaking of Euskera in parts of the Riojas, is documented in church and government chronicles of the ninth and tenth centuries (Merino Urrutia 1978).

The maximum expansion of the power and territorial limits of the kingdom of Navarra or Pamplona was achieved by the Navarrese king, Sancho Garcés III ("the Great") in the 1030s. He won territory from the remaining Muslim lords in the Ebro valley, but mostly from the kingdom's Christian neighbors. Sancho extended his authority along the Pyrenees



Adapted from  
(Sainz Ripa 1982:56)

Figure 6. Several monasteries and settlement sites of the Kingdom of Navarra in Rioja.

and the coastal regions of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa passed from Leonese to Navarrese control. He inherited Castile through matrimonial alliances and in 1030 he invaded León and overran most of it except Galicia. For once, the entire Euskera-speaking region was under one rule (Collins 1986:180-182). Whether the kingdom was construed as Basque is debated. Palacios (1978) describes the kingdom as Basque while Collins disputes that the monarchy was self-consciously Basque, despite the Basque origins of the dynasty. Although much of the population probably spoke Euskera, all legal and administrative documents were in Latin. But Latin was the lingua franca for church and government throughout medieval Europe. At his death in 1035, Sancho declared himself rex Hispaniarum, "king of the Spains" (Collins 1986: 182).

Navarra and the Riojas were also open to French influence in the Middle Ages due to the Franks' presence in Navarra and to the Camino de Santiago de Compostela which passed through those zones. As early as the tenth century, pilgrims from France and other parts of Europe began making the long and arduous journey to the shrine of Santiago in Galicia. According to legend, St. James, the apostle, is said to have preached the Gospel in Spain soon after the Crucifixion. After James' martyrdom in Jerusalem, his body was supposedly smuggled back to Galicia by a party of Spanish disciples. The sarcophagus holding his remains was

lost for about six centuries. In 813, a bright star accompanied by celestial music revealed the location of the remains to a Galician hermit. The Catholic Church and Christian king of Asturias confirmed the remains as those of St. James and the pope publicized the miracle of their discovery throughout Catholic Europe. Pilgrims came to venerate the holy remains and a town and cathedral grew around the site. Although neither James' missionary work in Spain nor the return of his body to Galicia are based in historical fact, the shrine attracted pilgrims and penitents throughout the Middle Ages. As noted in the Introduction, the main pilgrim's road was re-routed through the Riojas by the eleventh century and French Benedictine monks established several hostelries in the Riojas (Abad Leon 1975).

A cult of St. James evolved which was important to the success of the Christian Reconquest. It portrayed James as a pilgrim and great warrior, smiting the Arab infidels. He became the patron saint of Spain and the special protector of Christian soldiers in the wars against the Moors. By the eleventh century the apostle was known as "Santiago Matamoros" ("St. James, Slayer of Moors"). However, the victorious Christians were by no means united.

At Sancho the Great's death in 1035, his kingdom was split between his four sons. Disputes and battles between the various Christian kingdoms--Castile, Navarra, Leon,

Aragon, were nearly constant, with resulting frequent boundary changes. Navarra was reduced to the smallest of the monarchies, hemmed in by its increasingly powerful neighbors. The majority of the Rioja valley had been won by Alfonso VI, of Castile, in 1076. Rioja became contested ground for the kingdoms of Castile and Navarra. In 1163 Sancho el Sabio of Navarra won back much of Rioja from Castile. Labastida and Laguardia, as their names testify, were established as centers of defense by the Navarrese in this frontier zone between Navarra and Castile. Both villages are part of modern Rioja Alavesa (see figure 7).

By 1201, most of Alava and Rioja were incorporated into Castile by an agreement between the Castilian king, Alfonso VIII, and Navarrese king, Sancho VII. An exception was the settlement of Laguardia and its surrounding hamlets, which remained two and a half centuries longer under Navarrese rule. Thus, the "Sonsierra de Navarra," only later to be called "Rioja Alavesa," was split between Navarra and Castile for nearly three centuries. Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa were also annexed to Castile in the late 12th century (Collins 1986: 240). Navarra came increasingly under French influence---the Navarrese monarchy passed to France through marital alliances in the thirteenth century.

During the politically volatile centuries of the Reconquest, with the various Christian kings vying for territory, the institutions of the "villas" and the "fueros"

emerged. In efforts to consolidate powers and to gain and maintain allegiance, the kings granted the status of "villa" to population nuclei, with corresponding "fueros," or charters of rights and privileges. The granting of the fueros entailed the codification of the customary laws of the local villas and regions. By swearing to uphold the fueros, the monarchs awarded a high degree of legal and fiscal autonomy to the constituent zones of their realms.

In 1461, Laguardia and environs were captured by Enrique IV of Castile and became part of Castile until 1486 when most of the townships of Rioja Alavesa, except San Vicente de la Sonsierra and its subsidiary hamlets (Abalos and Briñas), were incorporated into the "Hermandad de Alava" (The Brotherhood, or League of Alava). This division coincides with the contemporary boundaries of the province of Alava. The villa of San Vicente, with its hamlets, never joined Alava and today these communities are part of the autonomous community of Rioja, although they are located on the Rioja Alavesa side of the Ebro (see Figure 7).

San Vicente, Labastida and Laguardia were each granted the status of villa in the twelfth century, and so, retained some rights and privileges throughout the era according to the fueros agreements. San Vicente's decision not to join the Hermandad de Alava, while the rest of the Sonsierra de Navarra joined Alava, is discussed by historians of local history, Tojal (1979), Palacios (1978) and Sainz Ripa





Adapted from:  
(Sainz Ripa 1982:144)

Figure 7. Locations of San Vicente, Abalos and Briñas in relation to Rioja Alavesa

(1983). Each author implies that San Vicente, as a villa, decided on this choice. It was only after the joining of Laguardia to the Hermandad de Alava that the "Sonsierra de Navarra" (of the mountains of Navarra) began to be referred to as "Rioja Alavesa." Due to increasing social, economic and political unrest in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, groups of villas had joined to form such wider organizations as the Hermandades for their own protection. The Hermandad of Alava had been created in 1458 by Enrique IV of Castile. These Hermandades were the forerunners of the modern provinces (Garcia de Cortazar et al. 1984:103-104).

With the marriage of Castile's Isabel and Aragon's Ferdinand in 1492, internal wars between the smaller kingdoms waned, and administrative, provincial divisions began to be solidified. Rioja Alavesa no longer served as a military outpost. However, it retained its border status as the southwest border of the province of Alava. To insure military security against the French, the monarchy permitted Alava, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa to maintain their *fueros*, the rights and privileges codified during the Reconquest. In addition to the recognition of the *fueros*, grants of "collective nobility," to be explained in the next section, were also used to keep Basques supportive of the fragile monarchy.

Navarra actually remained fully independent until 1512. At that time Ferdinand II, the King of Aragon and Regent of Castile, was waging war against the French and demanded free passage of his troops through Navarra. The Navarrese refused him and Ferdinand invaded Navarra and annexed it. In 1530, Spain relinquished the bulk of what had been Navarrese territory on the other side of the Pyrenees to France and the Spanish Basque country took on more or less its present shape. The Treaty of the Pyrenees, formally establishing the Spanish/French border, was not signed until 1659. (Collins 1986)

#### Basques and the Spanish State: From 1492 to 1876

Several analysts of Basque ethnicity and nationalism (Azcona 1984, Grillo 1980, Gurrachaga 1981, Collins 1986, Greenwood 1977) have effectively argued that the evolution of Basques from ethnic group to ethnic nation is closely related to the region's interrelations with the developing Spanish nation-state over the course of several centuries. The privileges of collective nobility and the fueros granted by Ferdinand and Isabel gave the inhabitants of Basque areas distinct legal status and exemptions.

The 800 year Reconquest of Spain was largely attained through the gradual and sporadic military conquests of armies of peasants led by their lords. The ideals of a daring and brave nobility using courage, tenacity and Christian zeal to overcome the superior numbers and

technology of the Moors generated an ethos of religious patriotism which characterized the Spain of Ferdinand and Isabel. The concept of nobility was an integral part of this ethos. Nobles gained power through military conquest and to be noble implied a pure Christian genealogy (e.g. not tainted by Moorish or Jewish blood). But, as Moore notes, nobility also became a more generalized ideal in Spain due to the heritage of the Reconquest and the power and autonomy of the small kingdoms--even commoners could feel they were of "noble" character, if they were not titled nobles (Moore 1976:115).

"Collective nobility," explains Greenwood, "is a direct translation of the Spanish "hidalguía Colectiva." For Basques of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and selected areas of Alava and Navarra, this meant that the state conferred automatic nobility for being born in the Basque country of Basque parents, enabling the rich or poor to be "noble" (Greenwood 1977:86-87). This privilege allowed for freedom from taxation and freedom from military conscription, among other benefits, and became a "prime point of contention between the Basques and successive Spanish regimes in the endless negotiations over provincial autonomy and rights" (Palacios 1978: 86). Collective nobility was frequently cited by the Basques in support of their claims to unique status within the Spanish state and to legal and fiscal autonomy (Greenwood 1977).

The grants of collective nobility made to Basques by the Spanish Crown not only encouraged Basque cooperation in defending the border with France after the Reconquest, but also reflected the pattern of Moorish occupation in Spain. After seven centuries of Moorish rule in most of the country, claims to purity of blood were impossible to prove without elaborate genealogical evidence. But the Moors never conquered Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa and the Basques of these provinces, along with the Asturians, distinguished themselves as defenders of the last outposts of Christian Spain and as initiators of the Reconquest. Thus, Basques of these regions were able to use their history in supporting claims that the entire population was free of the contamination of Moorish blood and therefore eligible for noble status (Greenwood 1977:90-91).

Rioja Alavesa was not included in the grants of collective nobility. There, as in the rest of Spain, purity of blood (limpieza de sangre) had to be demonstrated by a meticulous process of genealogical investigation. This almost automatically made nobility a monopoly of the wealthy and literate classes, for the lower classes often lacked either the requisite documentation or the wealth needed to prove their claims to nobility (Greenwood 1977: 86-87). The Moors has occupied Castilian Rioja and Rioja Alavesa, which disallowed automatic claims of purity of blood in the Riojas.

In addition to grants of collective nobility, the Crown's acceptance of the local fueros in Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, and Alava was another concession made to bolster Ferdinand and Isabel's fragile control and encourage cooperation. The fueros, Heiberg explains, "were the foundation of Basque social, political and economic life from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when they were first formulated until 1876 when they were finally revoked" (Heiberg 1975: 170). The Crown's institutionalization of the fueros enabled Basques to "continue to have their own courts, parliaments, coinage, militia, customs boundaries and to be free from outside taxation. Moreover, the ordinances of the fueros covered nearly every aspect of Basque life from marriage and dowry to inheritance and political participation" (Ibid.). The monarchy's legalization of these historical privileges in the Basque zones also fostered a sense of unique Basque identity.

To protect their rights in negotiations and disputes with the monarchy, the Basques began to write down all of their laws and to document all correspondence with, and grants made by, the Spanish Crown. These compilations are important documents in the history of the evolution of Basque identity as they spell out Basque privileges and practices. Zaldibia published one of the most famous of these tracts in 1564 which included a history of his home region of Guipúzcoa, and sections on the origin of the

Basque language, local economy, social and military history of Basques, and a long section on collective nobility and privileges, and the royal oaths to uphold them (cited in Greenwood 1977:92-93). For Zaldibia, the Basques were the "best" and "purest" of Spaniards, uncontaminated by Moorish blood; as well as instigators of the Reconquest. Thus, "the Basque sense of ethnic uniqueness and their acceptance of the idea that they were Spanish were at the time easily compatible" (Ibid.). It was not until the central authorities of the emerging Spanish nation state sought to curtail Basque privileges that Basques began to perceive themselves as distinct from Spaniards, according to Greenwood.

By the eighteenth century, the Spanish monarchy's powers had grown, as had its desire for a uniform system of government within its borders. "Tensions were great and the Basques began to consider themselves an embattled ethnic minority" (Greenwood 1977:97). As high social standing and political power became attainable on the basis of wealth alone in the eighteenth century, the importance of nobility was weakened in Spanish society. Consequently, the concept of Basque collective nobility was reinterpreted by authors such as Larramendi (1754), who de-emphasized the purity of blood ideal and instead viewed collective nobility as an example of democratic qualities of Basques. Since Basques

were, hypothetically, equally noble, they were more egalitarian than other inhabitants of Spain.

In reviewing Larramendi's work, Greenwood notes, "His view of Basque superiority was founded on a reinterpretation of Basque history made to fit the declining importance of nobility and the rise of democratic philosophies of government. Larramendi viewed Spanishness and Basqueness as mutually exclusive and conflicting" (Greenwood 1977:97-98). The basis for a Basque identity in contradistinction to a Spanish one was laid. Caro Baroja notes that modern interpretations of Basque history sometimes romanticize the collective nobility and the foral system by suggesting that there has always been egalitarian self government among Basques, as compared to the Spanish. But, up until the 1500s, Caro Baroja points out that there had been much ongoing conflict between bands and lineages within the Basque provinces rather than a unified Basque democracy (Caro Baroja 1980a:44).

During the nineteenth century, successive Spanish governments all favored increased centralization and legal and administrative uniformity for the entire country. This process was expedited by the repercussions of Spain's War of Independence with France from 1808 to 1814. In 1808, Napoleon engineered the abdication of Spain's King Ferdinand VII, and his replacement by Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte. The War of Independence resulted. During the



war, Spanish liberals took advantage of the absence of Spain's ruling house to create a centralized, representative regime with the aim of eradicating special privileges such as the Church's tax-free lands, and the autonomous status enjoyed by the Basque provinces. Ferdinand returned to power after Napoleon's defeat in 1814, and annulled the 1812 Constitution passed by the liberals, reestablishing an absolutist monarchy. The passage of the 1812 Constitution was the first phase of the struggle between liberals and traditionalists which would divide Spain throughout the century and culminate in the Civil War of 1936 (Clark 1979:25-26). Although Basques did fight alongside other constituent groups of the Spanish kingdom against the invading troops of Napoleon, indicating they felt some allegiance to Spain at this time, the liberal - traditionalist rift exacerbated by the war was to divide Basques as well.

Also during this period, as noted in the Introduction, provincial boundaries were being formalized as part of the strategy to centralize and uniformly administer the Spanish state. Representatives from all of the geographic zones of the Riojas met in 1812 to petition for the creation of a province which would recognize the geographic integrity of the zone. The Cortes of 1821 approved a provisional division into fifty-two provinces, one of which was a Logroño which incorporated Rioja Alavesa and the section of

Navarra also considered part of the geographic region of Rioja. But Fernando VII declared the 1821 constitution null and void and administrative divisions reverted to what they had been prior to 1821. By this earlier division, Rioja Alavesa was part of Alava, and Logroño did not exist as a separate province, but was divided between Burgos and Soria. In 1833, the provincial boundaries were again revised by Royal Decree, establishing forty-nine provinces. The reduced province of Logroño was established, with Rioja Alavesa remaining part of Alava, and the wine-growing area of Navarra bordering the Ebro remaining part of Navarra.

Throughout Alava, Navarra, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, conflicts of interest were growing between a conservative, prosperous rural peasantry and an emerging urban mercantile class. This antagonism became a crucial factor in the Carlist Wars of the nineteenth century. These conflicts were ostensibly over succession to the Spanish throne, with the defenders of Don Carlos, brother of the deceased king, Ferdinand VII, challenging the defenders of Isabel II, the daughter of the late king who had inherited the throne. Don Carlos represented the forces of tradition while Isabel favored the liberal reformers. "Carlism," Heiberg notes, "was actually a revolt against the economic, religious and political policies of the Liberal regime in Madrid" (Heiberg 1975:172).

Basques feared the revocation of the *fueros* with the increasing centralization of Isabel's reign. Since Carlists proposed to protect local privileges, and the supremacy of the Catholic Church, "they picked up a massive following among rural Basques" (Heiberg 1975:172). Heiberg summarizes the division among Basques:

Carlism on the whole was a populist, grass-roots movement, anti-patrician in sentiment in spite of its emphasis on monarchy. The driving force behind Carlism was the hatred of a prosperous peasantry directed against the cities, and the threat to its interests which this group of people saw embodied in modern, industrial enterprise. Opposed to the rural Basques who embraced Carlism, the upper class urbanites of the Basque provinces saw in Liberalism an ideology better suited to their changing, mercantile needs. (Heiberg 1975:172)

During the two Carlist Wars, 1833 to 1839, and 1872 to 1876, the Basque cities of Bilbao and San Sebastian remained Liberal strongholds. Palacios notes that inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa were divided in their allegiance to the Carlists and the Liberals. He views the Carlist supporters as defenders of Basque tradition and autonomy:

The population (of Rioja Alavesa), as in the rest of the Basque Country, was divided between Liberals and Carlists. The Foral Carlists had more popular support, especially among the peasants of medium income, men of the Catholic religion and lovers of traditionalism. Grouped under the slogan of "Dios, Fueros, Rey," they defended the ancient laws and customs of the Basque Country threatened by Liberalism. The liberals, in general, defended the interests of the large landowners, the merchants and the existing oligarchy. (Palacios 1978: 159)

With the triumph of the Liberals in 1876, Basque *fueros* were revoked. The loss of the *fueros*, according to Palacios,

"was one of the most ignominious events imposed by Castilian centralism on these lands" (Palacios 1978:162).

Modern Basque Nationalism: Differential Effects  
in the Spanish Basque Provinces, 1876 - 1987

With the revocation of the fueros, Basques were deprived of their special privileges and permitted only a concierto económico (economic agreement) which allowed them to assess their own taxes and pay a specified sum to the national treasury. In addition, the use of Euskera in the printed media was banned, along with other oppressive measures, as part of a government campaign to undermine Basque solidarity. Heiberg reminds us, nonetheless, that the Carlist wars were also civil wars in the Basque Country since Basques who supported Isabel II were pitted against the Carlist Basques (Heiberg 1975:173). Palacios correlated a pro-Carlist with a pro-Basque stance since Carlists had favored the defense of the fueros. He glosses over the fact that many Basques supported the Liberal side (Palacios 1978).

By 1894, the conservative political ideology of Basque nationalism grew in the city of Bilbao, which had been a Liberal bastion during the Carlist Wars. The rapid industrialization that took place in the Basque cities of Bilbao and San Sebastian from the late 1870s to the 1890s influenced the advent of Basque nationalism. Changes in central government policy actually promoted the industrial development. Bilbao's commercial potential and exploitation

of its rich reserves of iron ore could not be fully realized under the foral system. The fueros had established local customs boundaries which limited the scope of markets, and imposed stiff import taxes on needed manufacturing goods from England and France. The foral system also gave political supremacy to rural landowners rather than to the urban mercantile class. But when the fueros were revoked in 1876, trade restrictions were lifted and industrial development was rapid (Heiberg 1975:175).

It was not the Basque financial or intellectual aristocracy who favored Basque nationalism. These sectors of Basque society were an integral part of the Spanish government and establishment and held power in it. The proponents of Basque nationalism, were, rather, from the middle and upper-middle classes and were often from Carlist backgrounds. The nationalist ideology reflected Carlist ideas of traditionalism and provincial rights. The increasing centralization and internationalization of an industrial complex controlled by Basque business elites with ties to the central government, and the arrival of "foreign" working masses from other areas of Spain, threatened both traditional middle class values and power bases. The complexity of Basque nationalism cannot be underestimated, notes Heiberg: "For purposes of analysis, Basque nationalism presents several theoretical problems. The bits and pieces of which it is comprised cannot readily be made

to fit into any pre-existing theoretical framework" (Heiberg 1975:180). She and other scholars (Greenwood 1977, da Silva 1975, Pi-Sunyer 1985) conclude that an understanding of the historical context of the movement is essential to its interpretation.

The precedent of granting special privileges to the Basque provinces by the Spanish monarchy, which began in the late 1400s, influenced the eventual organization of a Basque nation. But with the increasing centralization and liberalization of the Spanish nation-state, Basque privilege was threatened. When the *fueros* were revoked in 1876, not all Basques reacted negatively to this curtailment of Basque autonomy. Those who profited from the liberalization of trade and import regulations produced by the abolition of the *fueros* did not align with Basque nationalism. Also, areas such as Rioja Alavesa were geographically isolated from the Basque nationalist movement which originated in the northern cities.

Sabino de Arana y Goiri, the acknowledged founder of Basque nationalism, came from a well-to-do Carlist family of Bilbao. Arana promoted Basque distinction in formulating separatist platforms, based on racial and linguistic features. The Basque farm--called the caserío in Spanish and baserri in Basque, was also used as a symbol of a separate Basque identity. These farms were dispersed smallholdings characteristic of rural areas of Vizcaya,

Guipúzcoa and northern Navarra. In addition, the fiscal and administrative freedoms Basques had under the fueros system were viewed as a legitimization of Basques' right to autonomy. Recognition of the authority of the Catholic Church was also part of the nationalist platform. Arana and his disciples founded the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (Basque Nationalist Party), a political party to represent the Basque nationalist platforms.

In spite of the similarities of Basque nationalism and Carlism, Arana rejected Carlism as a primarily Spanish rather than a Basque movement. Carlists favored Basque rights within the Spanish state. The ultimate aim of the Carlists was political and military victory throughout Spain, whereas the Basque nationalists proposed an agenda for a separate Basque nation, focusing on Basques' distinction from Spaniards. Still, in spite of political and ideological conflicts, the nationalists and Carlists maintained limited working relations during the first three decades of the century--they shared the common foes of centralizing Spanish liberalism on the national level, and the growing strength of the Left in Vizcaya (Payne 1977:122).

In 1931, Basque nationalists and Basque Carlists joined together in a vasconavarra (Basque-Navarra) electoral coalition to defend Catholicism and Basque regional interests and won 15 of 24 seats to the Spanish Republic's

Constituent Cortes (Parliament). But, growing differences between the Basque provinces were to split them politically, as Payne explains:

divergence between the two movements was being accentuated by the growing difference between their social and geographical bases of support within the Basque provinces. Nationalism rested primarily on the middle and lower-middle classes of the two industrial provinces, while Carlism was being increasingly confined to the peasantry and lower-middle class of the two agrarian provinces, Navarra and Alava....The social and economic interests of Navarra and Alava were now clearly distinct as well, and in an autonomous region might well be overshadowed by the industry, commerce and finance of the two modernized provinces. (Payne 1977:123)

When the Republican constitution of 1931 formally separated church and state, the Carlists decided against any further cooperation with the Republican government, while Basque nationalists kept working with the Republic to establish a modified autonomy statute. The split between Carlists and Basque nationalists became evident in the fate of the Autonomy Statutes drafted by the Basques under the Second Republic. In 1932, Navarra rejected the autonomy draft and chose not to join in a Basque union with Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and Alava. In August, 1933, a third version of the draft Statute was approved by the latter three provinces. But by the time of the second Republican parliamentary elections in November, Carlists won the majority of seats from Navarra and Alava, while Basque nationalists won 12 of the 15 seats from Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. In December of 1933, when the draft Statute was



presented to the president of the Cortes for action, 57 of Alava's 77 mayors voted not to be included in the Statute. The Basque nationalists were forced to postpone their struggle for autonomy until 1936, when only Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa joined and were granted autonomous status by the Republic, several months after the outbreak of the Civil War (Payne 1977).

With the Republican legitimization of the Basque Autonomy Statute, the majority of Basque nationalists of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa supported the Republicans. But in Alava and Navarra, many joined the Carlists in support of the Spanish Nationalist movement of Mola and Franco. By 1936, the main political orientation of the Navarrese Carlists was not regionalist-provincialist, but more broadly Spanish and ideological, and staunchly pro-Catholic. The Carlists had come to share more common ground with pro-Franco factions than with Basque nationalists (Payne 1977: 125). Although there was general support of Franco in Alava, Alaveses did not uniformly favor Franco. This was illustrated during fieldwork in Rioja Alavesa when I was told about factions within villages, and of some villages being pro-Franco, and others, pro-Republican. Parrish was also told about political cleavages of different villages in the Riojas before and during the Civil War by his informants in the area (Parrish 1984:147-148).

But Navarra and Alava were considered, in general, to have allied with Franco, which made for very different post-war policies towards the four Spanish Basque provinces. Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa lost the last remaining vestiges of fiscal and administrative autonomy, while Alava and Navarra were allowed to retain their own tax structures and some degree of local administrative autonomy. The latter two provinces were rewarded for their general support of Franco during the war, while Basque culture and language were proscribed in the northern provinces (Payne 1977). Franco's policy to unify Spain culturally and politically involved the harsh repression of all symbols of and movements towards regionalism, much less separatism. The severity of the Franco regime towards Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa served to promote a sense of Basque separateness, to further alienate a "Basque" from a "Spanish" identity, and to further politicize Basque identity. The Basque provinces' relations with the central state under Franco reinforced a Basque identity distinct from a Spanish one in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, while distancing Alava and Navarra from a Basque identity.

Gurrachaga notes that for Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, the dialectic of the region with the central state became one of the "victors" and the "vanquished." Declared "traitor" provinces by Franco, a "society of silence" resulted, a society without faith in the legitimacy of its central

government (Gurrachaga 1981). Franco's policies of oppressing Basque culture fostered the conception of Basques as different from Spaniards. The school system organized under Franco was expressly used to inculcate an ideology combining hispanidad (Spanishness) and Catholicism. Such practices, and general repression, resulted in Spanish culture being viewed as an enemy of Basque culture (Urla 1987:105-106).

In 1947, the first organized opposition to the regime began with a series of general strikes by miners and metal workers in Basque and Asturian mining and industrial centers in the north. These strikes resulted in military occupation, suspension of civil rights, and arrest and dismissal of thousands of workers between 1947 and 1951. But the strikes also catalyzed other opposition. University students around the country organized strikes in support of the workers and to protest the rigid intellectual censorship of the regime. Also, the lower clergy of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa began to denounce social injustices and police repression in the provinces. With internal unrest and international pressure for reform increasing, some of the regime's more oppressive policies against Basque language and culture were relaxed in the early 1950s. A number of Basque magazines, journals and cultural organizations were revived or initiated (Urla: 1987:107-108).

In 1952, a group of university students at the University of Duesto in Bilbao began to meet secretly to discuss the future of Basque resistance. They were frustrated by the inability of the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV) to unite and inspire Basque resistance. As the group grew, they were invited to merge with the PNV; they did so in 1957. But the rapprochement lasted only two years--the youth accused the PNV leadership of immobility. The youth broke with the PNV in 1959, forming the separatist organization "ETA" (Euskadi ta Askatasuna--"Basqueland and Freedom") (Clark 1979:156).

At the outset, ETA was neither committed to violence or particularly revolutionary. The group was not involved in any violent actions and restricted itself almost entirely to the printing and distribution of pamphlets. They viewed cultural and linguistic revival as crucial to counteract the years of anti-Basque propaganda which Franco's regime had used to distort Basque history and culture. In contrast to the Basque nationalism espoused by Arana, wherein recruitment was based on genealogy and surnames, ETA accepted new members only after they were versed in Basque cultural heritage (Urla 1987: 111-112). However, the violence of the suppression of ETA by Franco's forces drove the group further underground and hardened its leaders, pushing ETA closer to an ideology of revolutionary violence. By 1962, revolutionary socialism became an important part of

the group's ideology. Many factions developed within the organization due to disputes regarding political ideology and use of violence (Clark 1984).

Clark (1984) provides a good overview of the complexities of these developments. He concludes that ETA's strategy to the mid 1970s involved acts of symbolic violence aimed at government agencies, officials and symbols, as well as bank robberies and kidnapping of Basque capitalists to gain resources for the organization. By 1973, only one bystander had died in an ETA-related incident. Clark contends that the main terrorism in the Basque Country during the 1960s and early 1970s was the state-sanctioned terrorism of the Franco regime against Basques. From 1966 to the mid 1970s, on six occasions a "state of exception" was declared in the Basque provinces, one step short of martial law, in which normal legal rights of citizens were suspended, and persons were imprisoned and tortured without any charge being brought against them. Violent activities of ETA increased during the mid-1970s in reaction to the violence of the regime (Clark 1984).

With the death of Franco in 1975, King Juan Carlos and the first premiere of the post-Franco government, Adolfo Suarez, declared amnesty for the majority of political prisoners except those who had been involved in "blood crimes." These leaders were trying for a delicate balance in appeasing both rightist and separatist elements in the

country. Basque leaders argued all political prisoners should be released, and wanted faster action on autonomy status for the provinces. Police suppression of strikes and demonstrations in Vitoria, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa exacerbated tensions. In 1977, a newly elected Spanish parliament approved total amnesty for all political prisoners, and pre-autonomy status was granted to the Basques and Catalans. Still, some elements of ETA remained committed to violent tactics, and have continued to engage in them, although Clark thinks that support for violent actions has declined among the Basque population since democratization (Clark 1979: 267-299). Diaz Lopez (1985), on the other hand, cites a survey conducted in the Basque Country in 1979 which indicated a considerable degree of support for the violent strategies of ETA. He also thinks, however, that ETA support is steadily declining (1985:264).

Rioja Alavesa was mostly isolated from these developments. Not subject to the oppression and violence of the Franco regime that stirred Basque nationalism and the formation and activities of ETA, inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa instead enjoyed a privileged economic status under Franco. After Alava joined the autonomous community of the Basque Country in 1979, Basque political parties did gain support in the province. Although support for regional and ethnic political parties has been used as an indicator of ethnic identity and nationalist sentiment (Palacios 1978,

Clark 1979), the Basque political parties vary in their ideologies.

The split of the ETA youth from the PNV in 1959 marked a divergence from the conservative, middle-class oriented PNV organization to a Basque oriented ideology of revolutionary socialism among ETA supporters. Although ETA did not form into a political party, a political coalition closely aligned with ETA's ideology, Herri Batasuna (HB - Popular Unity), was formed in 1978. For most of its existence, this party denied the legitimacy of the entire juridical and statutory framework within which Basque autonomy emerged since 1979. Until the late 1980's, HB members refused to occupy seats they won in either the Spanish, Basque or provincial elections. Euzkadiko Ezkerra (EE - Basque Left) is a more moderate party whose elected officials have played active roles in all governmental bodies to which they are elected. Although EE supported the autonomy statute, this party sees autonomous status as only a step towards full sovereignty of the Basque Country. Both HB and EE look for support from the immigrant as well as the indigenous Basque working class (Gunther et al. 1986:341-343).

Disagreements over home rule and other issues within the PNV caused a split in that party in 1986 and the formation of the splinter party, Eusko Alkartasuna (EA - Basque Solidarity). In the 1986 Basque parliamentary

elections, although 69% of the voters voted for one of the several Basque nationalist options, no single Basque party was able to form a governing majority. As a result, the Spanish party, PSOE (Partido Socialista de Obreros Españoles - Spanish Worker's Socialist Party), joined the Basque party representatives in a governing coalition of the autonomous Basque community. The PNV has lost seats to the other Basque parties in elections since the mid-1980s (Clark 1989).

Clark (1987) posits that votes cast for any of the Basque political parties indicate a "rejectionist vote" against the central government and support for Basque autonomy and/or independence. He analyzed eight elections from 1977 to 1986 in the Basque Country and found that 55.6% of the voters chose one of the Basque parties. But he also found unequal geographic distribution of the rejectionist voting patterns across the three provinces, with Guipúzcoa showing the highest percentage of rejectionist votes (61.7), Vizcaya the next highest (54.9) and Alava the lowest (42.8). He found rejectionist voting distributed "in approximately the same pattern as language usage and other expressions of ethnicity. That is, like Euskera usage and ETA recruitment, rejectionist voting tends to be heaviest in a roughly triangular area extending from Bilbao on the west to southern Guipúzcoa province on the south, to San Sebastian on the east" (Clark 1987:436-437). These differential



the centers of Basque nationalism. Of the seven comarcas (voting districts) within Alava, Rioja Alavesa showed the lowest mean rejectionist voting rate (34.9%) in the elections from 1977 to 1986 (Clark 1987: 435). But in the municipal elections of 1987, the PNV won the majority of seats in local village governments of Rioja Alavesa. This election is analyzed in Chapter Seven.

The heterogeneity of the Basque provinces complicates politicization based on allegiance to the ethnic nation. Linz comments, "building a nationalist movement on the basis of primordial characteristics becomes, then, plagued with difficulties in such places as the Basque and Catalan countries" (1985:204). He suggests that defining ethnic membership on the basis a territorial and/or a volutaristic definition---i.e., "those who live and work in the area", "those who want to share in the national identity"---will be more apt to gain adherents from people in the Basque provinces who do not share the traits of Basque ancestry or fluency in the Basque language. Linz posits that "if defense of the primordial characteristics . . . is carried to the extreme, the only options are assimilation or expulsion of those unwillingly to accept primordial values" (Linz 1985:205).

Although Linz addresses these issues in light of the large immigrant population from other parts of Spain who live and work in the Basque provinces and who compose one

third of the population of the Basque Country, the issue is equally relevant to such an area as Rioja Alavesa, which, as a border zone subject to a variety of influences, has developed a cultural identity distinct from the northern Basque provinces. Now that Alava is part of the autonomous Basque community, the ethnic ideology of Basqueness is being adapted to better incorporate peripheral populations such as Rioja Alaveses. Spain's recognition of an ethnic territory--the autonomous Basque community--as an administrative unit within the Spanish nation-state, fosters the expansion of ethnic membership within the Basque political/administrative unit defined by the state (Nagel 1986).

Palacios, a historian who defends a Basque identity for Rioja Alavesa, is critical of the "first chauvinists of the initial Partido Nacionalista Vasco who, in clinging to "apellidismo, clericalismo and euskaldunismo" (surnames, clericalism and Euskera-speaking), left out great sectors of Basques who did not respond to the radical thesis of Sabino Arana" (Palacios 1978: 25). Palacios uses history and patriotism (as indicated by support for Basque political parties) in arguing that Rioja Alaveses are indeed Basques. Definitions of who is Basque are in flux. Inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa participate in the processes of re-thinking Basque identity. Although most informants from Rioja Alavesa indicated they are Basque in the sense that they live in a Basque territory, many thought they were "less

Basque" because they did not share the primordial elements that are generally associated with Basqueness.

This chapter has illustrated how different historical contexts have influenced varying answers to the question "who are the Basques?" The differential influence of the Romans, Visigoths and Moors on the valley and mountain zones inhabited by Basque peoples served to distinguish these zones culturally and linguistically (Collins 1986). Rioja Alavesa has been a political borderland from the Visigoth period, through the conflicts between Christian kingdoms following the Reconquest, to the contemporary divisions into administrative provinces and now, autonomous communities.

When the Catholic monarchs granted collective nobility and institutionalized the Basque *fueros* in the fifteenth century, Basques were singled out for special recognition and privilege by the Crown. Rioja Alavesa did not share equally in these privileges as the area was excluded from collective nobility status. When defeat of the Carlists in 1876 resulted in revocation of the *fueros* and subsequent rapid industrial development in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, Basque nationalism emerged as a counter to Madrid's centralization policies, and to socialist ideologies of incoming workers. Alava and Navarra, which remained largely agricultural during this period, were isolated from the forces which influenced the beginnings of the Basque nationalist movement in Bilbao in 1894.

The four provinces split politically during the Civil War. Franco's oppression of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, as well as the regime's policies of inculcating a Spanish identity and eliminating regional identities, served to reinforce the identity of northern Basques as distinct from Spaniards. Franco's granting of privileged economic status to Alava and Navarra did not promote Basque identification in those provinces.

With the advent of democratic government after Franco's death in 1975, and the legitimization of the Basque autonomous community in 1979, yet another phase in nation-state-regional relations has begun. With the incorporation of Alava into the autonomous Basque community, Rioja Alavesa is no longer just a provincial border zone, but a border zone between the Basque and Riojan autonomous communities. This change in the significance of the Ebro River boundary raises questions as to how the people divided by that boundary are to be defined. The processes of Basque nation building occurring at the local level in Rioja Alavesa will be examined from various perspectives in the following chapters. This chapter has described the historical status of Rioja Alavesa as a border zone, and the evolution of Basque identity vis-à-vis the development of the Basque region's relations with the Spanish nation-state. The focus has been on the general political aspects.

Before examining more closely the cultural effects of Rioja Alavesa's incorporation into the autonomous Basque community, it is necessary to describe Rioja Alavesa's relationship to the autonomous community of Rioja in light of the shared ecological niche of the two zones, and of the development of the Riojan wine industry. An understanding of the relationship of the two Riojas is an essential foundation for discussions of changing identity in Rioja Alavesa. The grape-wine complex and associated lifeways have characterized the political sub-zones on both sides of the Ebro which produce wine as part of a geographic region known as La Rioja.

CHAPTER 4  
RIOJA ALAVESA AND THE RIOJAN WINE DISTRICT: ENVIRONMENTAL,  
ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL INFLUENCES ON A REGIONAL IDENTITY

Rioja Alavesa is considered part of the "geographic region" of Rioja, which overlaps several provincial borders, and which is famous for the production of Rioja wines (see Figure 2). In this chapter, I will describe the environmental conditions of the geographic wine-producing region of Rioja, and the development of the wine industry. An understanding of Rioja Alavesa as part of a geographic zone which also includes the river valley portions of the autonomous community of Rioja, and a corner of southwestern Navarra, is necessary for interpreting changes in regional and ethnic identity in the area since the formation of the autonomous communities.

Rioja Alavesa as Part of the Geographic Region of Rioja

Guides to wines refer to the Rioja as a wine-producing region incorporating sub-zones of several provinces (Read et al. 1987, Johnson 1984, García Santamaría and Martín Losa 1982). A single wine control board operates throughout these wine producing sub-zones. The board defines the Riojan wine district as including the adjacent areas of Alava, Navarra, and the former province of Logroño, now the autonomous community of Rioja, which produce the wine which

also goes by the name Rioja. García Santamaría and Martín Losa comment, "Rioja is a natural region, although administratively it pertains to three provinces: Logroño, Alava and Navarra" (1982:51). Read et al. describe a Rioja region which overlaps political boundaries:

The demarcated area of 37,500 hectares extends from the rocky gorge of the Conchas de Haro in the west to the flatter country around Alfaro, some 120 km. to the east. It lies along the valleys of the River Ebro and its tributaries... The vineyards are planted on both sides of the Ebro, and in the hilly western area are bounded by the abrupt heights of the Sierra Cantabria to the north and the rolling hills and wooded valleys of the Sierra de la Demanda to the south. There are three sub-regions: the cooler and hillier Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa to the west, and the sunnier and lower-lying Rioja Baja to the east (Read et al. 1987:89).

To clarify, Rioja Alta and Rioja Baja are sub-zones within the autonomous community of Rioja. The small strip of Navarra included in the wine district is ecologically more like the Rioja Baja, while Rioja Alavesa is similar to Rioja Alta (see Figure 8).

This geographic region of Rioja is characterized by the land form of the upper Ebro River Valley, enclosed on its northern and southern borders by mountain systems. To the north are the narrow ranges of the "Vasco-Cantabrian" mountains, including the Sierras de Obarenes-Cantabria (from 970 to 1496 meters), which separate Rioja Alavesa from the rest of Alava and the Basque Country. The Vasco-Cantabrian mountains are the southernmost arm of the Basque mountain



Adapted from:  
(Orbañanos Carrillo 1981:201)

Figure 8. Subzones of the Riojan Wine District: Rioja Alta, Rioja Baja and Rioja Alavesa



system and form the bioclimatic boundary with Northern, or "Humid" Spain and the rest of the country. The valley is enclosed to the south by mountain ranges included in the Iberian system, the Demandas and the Cameros (1,000 to 2,000 meters). In comparison to the narrow, uninhabited Vasco-Cantabrian range, the Cameros forms a broad, populated extension (García Ruiz 1982:26-28).

Although the Iberian peninsula is in the earth's temperate climatic zone, there are distinct variations within Spain. North Atlantic conditions predominate on the northern coasts -- abundant rain, cold winters, cool summers. In contrast, the Andalusian and Levantine coasts are characterized by a Mediterranean climate -- gentle winters and hot summers. The climate of the interior is described as 'mediterraneo continentalizado' (continental Mediterranean), in which there is a large difference between daytime and night-time temperatures and minimal rainfall (García Ruiz 1982: 39-43).

The Rioja has been described as a transitional zone between Mediterranean and Atlantic influences, since climatic conditions in the valley are not homogeneous and show characteristics of both climate types (García Ruiz 1982, Gonzalez Larraina et al. 1984). Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa are more open to Atlantic influences, and are therefore generally cooler and moister than Rioja Baja. Rainfall averages 475 mm. in Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa,

and 390 mm. in Rioja Baja. Mean yearly temperatures average 12.5 degrees C. in Rioja Alta and 14.4 degrees C. in Rioja Baja. Average annual hours of sunlight range from 3,173 hours in Alfaro, the easternmost town in Rioja Baja, to 3,067 in Haro, the westernmost town in Rioja Alta. It is a rare year when there are more than two to three days of snowfall anywhere in the valley, with winter temperatures averaging 7.5 C. Summer temperatures range from 20.5 C to 25 C during the day, but often drop to 12 to 14 C at night (Palacios 1978, García Santamaría and Martín Losa 1982, García Ruiz 1982).

Soil type also varies within the geographic region of Rioja and this affects agriculture. The most common soil type in Rioja Alavesa is arcillo calcáreo which is a limey clay soil of a depth of approximately one meter underlaid by rock formation. Pockets of this soil type are also found in Rioja Alta. This soil provides good drainage for vine cultivation. The other main soil type, found in Rioja Alta and most of Rioja Baja, are the arcillos ferrosos which are iron-bearing clay type soils with a deeper underlayer of rock. Alluvial soils are a third major soil type found in the river drainage of all three subregions (Parrish 1984: 21).

Such minor differences in soil and climate in the subregions of Rioja result in different agricultural adaptations. Hence, Rioja Alta and Alavesa are known for

production of the best of the Riojan wines, while those of Rioja Baja are thought to be somewhat inferior in quality (Gonzalez Larraina et al. 1984: 61). While Rioja Alta and Alavesa produce mainly grapes, a variety of other crops--potatoes, fruit (peaches, apples, pears, cherries), asparagus, leeks, and sugar beets are grown in Rioja Baja. In addition to this agricultural diversity of the Riojas, many people throughout the Riojas work in the industrial and service sectors. The inhabited mountain zone of the autonomous community of Rioja known as the Cameros is characterized by a pastoral lifeway. Although the Riojan economy is diverse, wine is the most famous product of the Riojas and it is becoming an increasingly important symbol of regional identity. Gonzalez Larraina discusses the complexity of the significance of wine in the Riojas:

We say wine is idealized and distorted because in the Rioja almost everything revolves around it--it is for some a political base, for others, a pillar of the provincial economy--wine is many more things, but always a base of conversations and mystifications. (1984:58)

A summary of the political and economic forces which have shaped the development of the Riojan wine industry will illumine the complexities of the "identity" of Rioja as a geographic region associated with its most famous product. The wine industry has been subject to the pressures and strains of larger units of production, international markets and changing political forces almost since its inception. The small, independent growers and wine makers idealized in

symbolizations of a wine culture have mostly depended on industrial wineries to purchase their grapes and wine. In addition, the political administrative divisions which intersect the geographic Riojan wine district have resulted in differential economic aid and support to local growers, and have had a divisive effect on both the economy and identity of the wine district.

#### Development of the Riojan Wine Industry

It is thought that wine was probably made in the Riojas before the arrival of the Romans, and it was definitely made during the Roman occupation. The remains of a large Roman winery from the first century A.D. were found at Funes, just across the Ebro River in Navarra. Wine was produced for both the occupying troops and for shipment to Italy (Read et al. 1987:86).

There are some scant references indicating that the Visigoths continued making and drinking wine, but, as in other regions, wine making declined during the Moorish occupation. Records show that vineyards were replanted by the monasteries established in the Riojas following the Christians' reconquest of the area. The pilgrim's route to Santiago de Compostela also influenced the wine's development. The French monks who ran the hospices along the route made wine for the pilgrims. The Tempranillo, the most characteristic of Riojan grapes, is thought to have

evolved from the Pinot Noir, a grape introduced from Burgundy by these monks (Read et al. 1987:86).

Government and church documents indicate that wine was an important part of local economy in the Riojas at least from the Middle Ages. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, royal decrees forbade injurious additives and the blending of wines from other regions (Read et al. 1987:88). Since the frontiers of the three medieval kingdoms of Aragon, Navarra and Castile met in Rioja, the region provided the favorite "vino corriente" (ordinary wine) to the nobles of these kingdoms.

By the late 1700s, grapes were fast becoming the primary crop in some parts of the Riojas, including Rioja Alavesa. The Amigos de los Vascongados (Friends of the Basque lands), a group of intellectuals and reformers who organized to study and improve life in the Basque territories, commissioned a report to be written on the economic status of Rioja Alavesa in 1771. Félix de Samaniego, a writer living in the village of Laguardia in Rioja Alavesa, wrote the report. He observed that more and more lands were being turned over to grape growing and expressed fears that people would become overly dependent on wages and profits from wine. Samaniego noted that fewer animals were being raised, causing a shortage of manure, and that the mountain forests were being cut for wood and charcoal (Gonzalez Larraina 1984:134-135). The interest of

the Amigos de los Vascongadas in Rioja Alavesa indicates that they perceived the zone to be part of the Basque territory and deserving of their attention.

As a result of Samaniego's report, the introduction of the Bordeaux method for making and aging the wine was suggested to improve the wine's quality and marketability. This method involved separating the grapes from the stalk before pressing, aging the wine in oak barrels, periodically decanting the wine off the lees (sediment which settles during fermentation) into fresh barrels, and clarifying the wine with beaten egg-whites. This method could produce an aged and preservable wine, in contrast to the "new" wine made by the Riojan growers. However, partly due to the expensive equipment necessary to implement the Bordeaux method, the populace was not receptive to this innovation. It would be another century before the method was successfully introduced to the Riojas (Gonzalez Larraina 1984:134-135).

For the following summary of the history of the wine industry from the nineteenth century, I have mostly relied on Parrish's (1984) excellent study of the evolution of class relations in the Riojan wine industry. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the quality of the wine produced was variable, and short-lived (vino corriente). It was not until the mid 1800s, with the establishment of the first large-scale commercial wineries and the introduction of the

Bordeaux method of aging the wine, that the quality of wine improved significantly. Influences, investments and innovations from outside the Riojas were largely responsible for the beginnings of the commercial wineries at this time. Parrish describes the changes in wine production from 1868 to 1892 as "dramatic and irreversible" (Parrish 1984:67).

The influence of the local landowning and merchant class gave way to incoming entrepreneurs who established the first large, commercial wineries. Prior to the arrival of these entrepreneurs, three main classes were involved in wine production. Peasants with medium-sized vineyard holdings, winery owners, and merchants formed a prosperous class. A small-holding landed proletariat supplemented limited incomes from their own meager holdings with wage labor for the more prosperous farmers. Finally, a landless proletariat relied solely on wage labor in others' vineyards; among these were migrant workers from Galicia and Aragon (Parrish 1984:52).

In 1868, the Marques de Riscal, a Basque nobleman from Vizcaya, and one of the largest landowners of Spain with estates in other regions, founded the first of the large scale, commercial wineries in the village of Elciego in Rioja Alavesa. He was one of the first to successfully adopt the Bordeaux method in the Riojas. Local growers were still cautious about trying the new technique. It was wealthy investors like the Marques who could afford to

experiment. His example was followed by other entrepreneurs who invested in wineries. A growing market for the wine in the northern Basque provinces, as well as in the rest of Spain and the Spanish colonies, also stimulated the growth of these commercial wineries, and interest in improving methods of wine preservation (Parrish 1984: 72-77).

France provided not only the Bordeaux method essential for aging the wine, required for its shipment to distant markets, but also became a primary market for the wine. The vineyards of France were diseased by an outbreak of oidium (erysiphe tuckeri) in 1852, by powdery mildew (plasmopara viticola) and, in 1867, were devastated by the deadly vine pest, phylloxera (phylloxera vastalis). Unlike oidium or mildew, the phylloxera actually destroyed vines, not just a particular harvest. The phylloxera is an insect of the plant louse family that feeds on the juice of the vine roots and kills the plant (Elías Pastor 1982:33). French wine merchants looked to the Rioja to replenish their supplies and a number of them engaged in shipping the wine. Others actually settled in the Rioja, set up wineries, and were influential in introducing modern French methods for making the wines (Read et al. 1987:87).

"By 1900", notes Parrish, "the Rioja was no longer a marginal or peripheral producer but an area where French, Spanish and Basque capitalists had established an agro-industrial complex" (Parrish 1984: 72). He describes the



contradiction of the establishment of these modern bodegas (wineries) and the persistence of the traditional growers as follows:

On the one hand, industrial bodegas with the most modern technology vitified and blended wine for the international market. On the other hand, the grapes and wine to be blended were produced by numerous small and medium holding wine growers without any basic modernization in techniques or social relations of production. (Parrish 1984:67)

A number of problems emerged by the end of the nineteenth century which curtailed the wine industry's general prosperity of the previous decades. Recovery of the French vineyards from the phylloxera epidemic caused a re-negotiation of the tariff treaty between France and Spain in 1892 making it more expensive to export wine to France. Most devastating, the phylloxera hit the Riojan vineyards in 1901 and destroyed the majority of them. Destruction was severe in Rioja Alavesa--of a total of nearly 14,400 hectares of vines in 1900, only 327 were left in 1904 (one hectare = 2.471 acres). Even with replanting, there were only 2,284 hectares by 1909. The only long-term solution to the phylloxera was the capital intensive replanting of phylloxera resistant American root stocks, and the grafting onto them of the European varieties. Lack of agricultural credit for the expensive replanting procedure was a major obstacle and local growers were largely unsuccessful in getting needed state aid from the Spanish state (Parrish 1984:100-108).

The economy of Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa had become highly dependent on wine and the impacts of the phylloxera epidemic were severe. Reduced employment opportunities forced emigration. The population of Rioja Alavesa declined from 14,129 in 1900 to 12,442 in 1910 (Barbancho in Parrish 1984:105). By World War I, Rioja's wine trade was concentrated into a few exporting wineries, although the traditional sectors of small growers still produced the bulk of the grapes and wine the large wineries bought (Parrish 1984:109).

The 1833 provincial divisions of the Rioja impeded the development of a regional organization to represent the interests of the entire wine district in negotiations with the Spanish state. There was awareness of the need for such organization as illustrated in a move to unite the wine growing districts in 1915. At that time, Felix Martinez Lacuesta, a winery owner from the town of Haro, and liberal politician who became the president of the provincial government of Logroño, proposed the creation of a mancomunidad del Ebro, or self governing alliance of the provinces along the Ebro River. Although his proposals were never implemented, they were very popular at the time, indicating some recognition of the wine-growing areas of the Riojas as a geographic zone with common economic interests. Regional elites of the wine-growing zones did succeed in

getting a royal decree passed which formalized the use of the name Rioja for the wine in 1926 (Parrish 1984:122).

Outside investment in the industry--especially by Basques from the northern provinces--increased in the early twentieth century. In the nineteenth century, viticulture was a source of original capital accumulation for the Basques. In the twentieth century, industrial profits from the growing industries of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa were reinvested in vineyards and bodegas (Parrish 1984:116). Fernández Ibañez notes: "some capitalists, especially Basques who had gotten rich from industry in Vizcaya, saw that the Riojan wine, made in the French style, was an authentic liquid gold mine" (Fernández Ibañez 1983:145).

The market for wine also expanded as the population increased in the growing industrial zones of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. Also, unemployed workers and growers from the Riojas often emigrated to find work in the growing industrial centers of the north. The development of the Riojan wine industry fostered these interrelationships of the Riojas with the Basque provinces of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. Rioja Alavesa's involvement with the wine industry also served to emphasize the identification of the zone with the wine-producing region of the "Rioja," geographically and culturally removed from the currents of Basque nationalism emerging in the northern provinces. Those who migrated from the Riojas to work in the industries

of the northern cities were among the waves of migrants from other areas of Spain seeking a better life. Along with the migrants from other parts of Spain, the migrants from the Riojas were referred to as maketos, the nickname the northern Basques gave to the newcomers. This indicates that migrants from Rioja Alavesa to Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa were not treated like Basque brethren by northern Basques during this period.

The Spanish Civil War of 1936 to 1939 and its aftermath had devastating effects on the wine industry. The war resulted in the uprooting of some vineyards for the planting of food crops and the temporary closing of some of the bodegas. Subsequent economic strategies of the Franco regime did not help the wine industry revive after the war. A policy of autarky, or national self-sufficiency, was instigated, and resulted in the stagnation and decline of the wine industry. It was a time of poverty for many small holders and vine workers in the Riojas. Vineyards neglected during the Civil War produced at a reduced rate (from 23 hectoliters per hectare to 12), and aging vineyards were not replanted. The regional elites were disorganized--these second generation heirs to the industrial wineries faced problems of decapitalization and loss of regional initiative. No new industrial wineries were established in the Riojas from 1939 to 1960 (Parrish 1984:165-169).

Franco's policies also purposely discouraged regional organization and initiative and the regime's differential policies towards the four Basque provinces affected their economic development. Unlike Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, Alava and Navarra received special tax breaks and other privileges under Franco. Thus, Rioja Alavesa, as part of Alava, was economically better off than Rioja Alta and Rioja Baja in the neighboring province of Logroño. One unifying factor for the wine-producing sub-zones of the Riojas was the creation of the single wine control board in the 1940s. But the small growers were barely represented on it. The twelve member board was composed of six government employees or appointees and six members elected through the vertical syndicates and agrarian brotherhoods established by Franco, which were dominated by the winery owners (Parrish 1984:170, 180).

With the failure of the agrarian fascist vision of a self-sufficient Spain of peasant small-holders, the Franco regime changed its economic policies after 1952. Modernization of agriculture and rural exodus were now encouraged. Spain's reintegration into the political and economic structures of Western capitalism during this period was stimulated by treaties with the United States for the establishment of military bases in Spain and consequent economic aid from the U.S. Still, the period up to the early 1960s was one of general decapitalization throughout

the wine industry, decreasing profitability of wine, lack of capital to mechanize the work of the vineyards or to replant aging vineyards. Although the rural population had stabilized under the earlier autarkic policies which discouraged migration, people began to leave for the cities of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and Navarra in the 1950s. The city of Logroño also attracted rural migrants and grew rapidly. The population of the Rioja Alavesa dropped from 12,817 in 1950 to 11,709 in 1960 (Parrish 1984:190-193).

During the depressed period of the 1950s, it was not only the poorest families who left. Members of the medium and larger landholding families also migrated. Entering businesses and professions in the cities seemed more secure and lucrative options than investment in the uncertain profitability of maintaining the family vineyards. The system of partible inheritance also made it difficult to gain a good livelihood from the divided properties. As the more well-to-do landlords sold vineyards, poorer families, often with money earned from wage labor in the cities and in local industries, bought vineyards piecemeal. Fernández Ibañez notes this trend towards land redistribution among the growers, without offering any causal explanation:

One of the most positive effects of this century is the disappearance of the differentiated classes in the population. Although at the beginning of the century, land and power were in the hands of a few families, by the middle of the century a curious phenomenon occurred: the big families began selling vineyards and the small farmers bought them without great difficulty. This

produced a leveling of class distinctions.  
(Fernández Ibañez 1983:178)

Barrett (1974) and Brandes (1975) found similar patterns of land redistribution in the Castilian and Huescan villages they studied in the late 1960s. The repercussions of the Civil War, industrialization, and migration caused a social and economic leveling in those communities as well.

Although the 1960s have been dubbed the period of the "economic miracle" of Spain, much of the prosperity resulted from the entry of foreign firms, the development of tourism, and remittances that Spanish "guest workers" sent home from the industrial centers of Northern Europe. High rates of rural exodus continued in the 1960s and the phenomenon of working part-time in agriculture, part-time in wage labor, was on the rise. The percentage of Spaniards working as agriculturalists went from 41.6% in 1960 to 21.7% in 1975. By 1972, 45% of the income of agriculturalists was derived from work other than agriculture (Parrish 1984: 202-203).

Riojan wine-growers continued to face problems into the 1960s--aging vines, difficulties in mechanization, parcelization of land, vine diseases. Parrish describes the 1960s and 1970s as a period of "dependent development" in the Riojan wine industry. New groups displaced or replaced many of the "traditional" owners of the Rioja's industrial wineries, e.g. those families who had established the early industrial wineries and who had evolved a regional

identification with the Rioja over the course of the century (Parrish 1984: 202-203).

The capital requirements for winery modernization needed to compete on the international wine market required the involvement of outside sources of credit. By the late 1960s and 1970s, a variety of external sources of capital vied for control of the Riojan wine industry. Three varieties of outsiders invested in the Riojan wineries: Basque firms, Andalusian sherry interests, and transnational corporations (Parrish 1984: 215, 223). Some of the firms founded by Basques from the northern provinces earlier in the century, such as CVNE, Bodegas Bilbainas and Marques de Riscal, expanded during this period. New wineries were opened, both large-scale wineries and some smaller, quality oriented wineries. Three large wineries were opened by Andalusian sherry companies.

A number of transnational corporations have entered the Rioja since the 1970s, in the wine and other industries (e.g. Japanese-based Sanyo, a giant electronics firm; Italian Zanussi, refrigerator manufacturers; and General Motors). Agricultural regions like the Riojas provide such firms with the low cost labor, high production and political disorganization of "los obreros verdes" ("green workers")-- newly displaced agricultural workers (or part-time agriculturalists) (Parrish 1984: 239).



Regional, even national control of the Riojan wine industry has been greatly diminished by the influx of these transnationals. Many wineries "now serve international centers of capital accumulation . . . traditional winery owners were marginalized as both the volume of wine production and commercialization increased in the late 1960s and early 1970s" (Parrish 1984: 236). The bodegas built by these new outside investors were outfitted with the most modern equipment.

While regional control of the wine industry diminished, the expanded operations of the outside investors provided jobs within the Riojas. Albeit low paid, assembly line type work for the most part, such employment opportunities, along with fewer job opportunities in the cities and abroad, may be curbing out-migration from the Riojas. Incomes from work in the large wineries and other industries have enabled some of the small-holders to invest in the now positively valued vineyards. The majority of these small-holders, however, lack the capital to market the wine, and most continue to sell their grapes or wine to the large wineries. Few of the commercial wineries have invested in vineyards, and leave the risky and labor intensive production of grapes to the small growers.

Differential aid to the growers on either side of the Ebro has continued since democratization and Alava's incorporation into the autonomous Basque community.

Although a number of inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa said they thought Alava had been economically better off as an independent province, since they now have to share a tax base with the declining industrial centers of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, most considered the aid and loans now available to the small holders of Rioja Alavesa to be beneficial. The administration of agricultural development for Alava is carried out by the provincial government of Alava (within the autonomous Basque community, the provincial governments of Alava, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa continue to administer many programs within the respective provinces). Parrish contrasts the economic aid provided by Alava and Logroño (e.g. now the autonomous community of Rioja):

In contrast to Logroño, the autonomous province of Alava was able to launch into viti-vinicultural issues with a vengeance. Alava provides its own extension service and more importantly, credits for constructing wine-grower wineries. These cooperative schemes provide outright grants for design and low-interest, long-term loans for construction. The popularity of this program has generated a backlog of applications . . . Both the provincial governments of the Rioja and Alava have shown interest in promoting wine but the autonomous province of Alava has been able to act." (Parrish 1984:243)

An extension service for the growers of Rioja Alavesa was established in the village of Laguardia in the early 1980s. Called the Casa del Vino (House of Wine), its staff provides technical assistance to the growers of Rioja Alavesa; research services to improve the vines and wines, disease control, and irrigation techniques; and promotional services. Prior to this, the growers of Rioja Alavesa used

the agricultural extension station in Haro, in the autonomous community of Rioja. The Basque government also began providing loans and grants to the growers in Rioja Alavesa for constructing their own wineries, for purchase and improvement of lands, and for machinery purchase.

The director of the Casa Del Vino said that the Basque government wants to aid the small growers in bottling and marketing wine, to decrease their dependence on the large wineries, but that this involves the introduction of the technology for bottling and marketing wine competitively. He characterized the Riojan grower as working the vineyards with "antiquated technology": "They are cultivators since time immemorial, and, because of this have not applied much new technology." However, a main reason they did not "apply new technology" earlier was the practical one of lack of capital to invest in the technology. Since credit has become available for tractors and other mechanized equipment, local growers have not hesitated to invest in them and have learned to use them very quickly. Some have made the criticism that the ready availability of the loans has prompted the purchase of unnecessary equipment.

Although the loan scheme of the Basque government at first encouraged the development of family wineries with loans and grants for individual bodega construction, loans for development of the commercialization of the wine are now being made only to cooperative groups. The director of the

Casa del Vino described the success of one such smaller scale cooperative in the village of Laguardia, where twelve growers have organized a marketing cooperative to sell the wine they make individually. Such marketing cooperatives contrast to some other cooperatives in the Riojas which mostly make wine in bulk to sell to the industrial bodegas. In aiding individual growers, and now, small groups of growers, to market their wine, the Director of the Casa del Vino said the Basque government hopes to begin to counter the power of the large, industrial bodegas.

Although this is a policy favored by observers of the industry in the neighboring autonomous community of Rioja (Gonzalez Larraina et al. 1984, Entrena and Jiménez 1984), the Riojan government has not been able to provide the same level of grants and loans to growers as the wealthier Basque government. Growers in the autonomous community of Rioja get most of their financing at higher interest rates through bank loans. Due to lack of capital, they are more dependent on selling their grapes or wine to the large wineries. The development efforts in Rioja Alavesa may be beginning to make a small wedge in this imbalance of power. Also, growers on both sides of the Ebro are able to engage in union activity since democratization.

During the Franco regime, an underground movement of agriculturalists grew up outside of the official vertical syndicates. Such clandestine activity, when discovered, was

harshly penalized. Shortly after Franco's death, a series of "tractor strikes" were organized by Riojan wine growers which blocked major roads in the area. The Union de Agricultores y Ganaderos de la Rioja, or UAGR (Union of Farmers and Stockbreeders of the Rioja) held its first congress in 1978. The union has since addressed issues of democratization of the Wine Control Board to better represent the interests of the growers, and has succeeded in negotiating price controls. Despite splits in the UAGR because of the socialist orientation of the union, its strength continues to grow (Parrish 1984: 241-242).

Growers in Rioja Alavesa participate in a separate branch of the same umbrella union, Union de Agricultores y Ganaderos de Alava. A Riojan journalist who reports on the wine industry described the union in Rioja Alavesa as more conservative than the branch in Rioja. She said that union leadership in Rioja Alavesa is aligned with the PNV, in contrast to a more socialist oriented leadership in the Riojan union. Perhaps due to the economic advantages in Rioja Alavesa, growers there have fewer demands than growers in the autonomous community of Rioja.

Differentiation within the wine-growing region of the Rioja is also promoted by those who have suggested the creation of a separate Wine Control Board for Rioja Alavesa. There was some talk of this during 1987 and the idea is expressed by Basque author, Busca Isusi:

It is our opinion that there should be a Denomination of Origin of Rioja Alavesa with its Wine Control Board composed of persons of recognized knowledge and integrity. . . . We understand also, that we could simulate that which occurs in some wine regions of France, with the wine originating from and named for specific villages. (Busca Isusi 1979:20)

Although Riojan scholar, Gonzalez Larraina, does not go so far as to suggest separate boards for the subzones, he does point out difficulties arising from the single Wine Control Board:

The subject is also complicated more if we consider that the Denomination of Origin includes three provinces: Alava, Navarra and the Rioja, and that the Wine Control Board is a supra-provincial organ with representation in the Autonomous Basque Region as well as in the Autonomous Region of Rioja. As a result, any change in the Wine Control Board or in any other aspect of the viti-viniculture policy first has to achieve an agreement between the two regions, overcoming unfounded suspicions and abandoning the peculiar idea that the wine of "Rioja" is the exclusive property of the province of Rioja. (Gonzalez Larraina 1984:104)

The analyses of both Gonzalez Larraina and Busca Isusi reflect the growing emphasis on the political boundary of the Ebro since the establishment of the autonomous communities. In their respective treatises on viti-viniculture, the authors focus on the subzones, Rioja Alavesa and the autonomous community of Rioja, rather than on the entirety of the wine-growing geographic region of the Rioja.

Local farmers I knew in Rioja Alavesa were almost unanimous in their opinion that the current structure of the Wine Control Board, while problematic, was the most

practical and realistic option. The idea of developing the French "chateaux" system in Rioja Alavesa, with families and villages marketing their own name-brand wine, although an ideal of many, was not seen as an immediate practical option. In the large bodegas, Riojan wines have traditionally been made by expert blending of wines from different vineyards and subzones of the area, rather than being wines produced from the specifically identified vineyards of a family, village, or subzone, such as is the case of the wines from the Bordeaux region of France. Grapes and wine from the three subzones of the Riojas are sold across the borders of the subzones. Therefore, a separate denomination of origin for Rioja Alavesa, meaning only grapes grown there could be used to make wine with the name Rioja Alavesa, and that growers could not sell their grapes and wine to wineries across the Ebro, would be restrictive. The Wine Board did pass an ordinance in 1970 to permit labelling which indicates the subzone in which the wine is made, but, it must still display the main name of origin as "Rioja". This main label thus represents Rioja as the geographic wine district encompassing several political provinces. It also accounts for the fact that grapes from more than one of the provinces were most likely combined to make the wine.

The Wine Control Board estimates that Rioja Alavesa produces 30% of the grapes for Riojan wines, Navarra

produces 5%, and the autonomous community of Rioja produces 65%. Of the wines used in Riojan wines, Rioja Alavesa produces 28%, Navarra 5% and Rioja 67%. A significant part of the harvest of Alava is bought by the bodegas located in the autonomous community of Rioja: approximately 5,000,000 kg. of grapes and 15,000,000 liters of wine produced in Rioja Alavesa are sold to wineries across the river (Gonzalez Larraina 1984:81). Likewise, wineries in Rioja Alavesa buy grapes and wine from growers of the autonomous community of Rioja.

This economic interdependence, and common interests of the wine growers, are de-emphasized in moves to distinguish and differentiate the newly autonomous political communities of Rioja and the Basque Country. An example is Gonzalez Larraina's section on the wine industry which he wrote for the comprehensive survey of Riojan agriculture published by the Provincial Chamber of Agriculture of Rioja (the autonomous community of Rioja) in 1984. Although he recognizes Rioja Alavesa as part of the wine district, he describes how the sub-zone differs from Rioja Alta and Rioja Baja, and focuses his analysis on these latter zones which are located within the boundary of the autonomous community of Rioja. He makes only passing references to Rioja Alavesa.

Gonzalez Larraina describes several differences between the vineyards and growers of Rioja Alavesa and those of the



autonomous community of Rioja. First, growers in Rioja Alavesa are much more active in the production of wine--an estimated 50% of the wine of Rioja Alavesa is made by the growers, almost double that made by the growers in Rioja. Second, the commercialization of the vino del año (wine of the year) is carried out to a much greater degree by growers in Rioja Alavesa, while in Rioja the direct commercialization by the grower is practically nonexistent. He explains these differences by positing that since the wine complex provides the principal income to the majority of families of Rioja Alavesa, the growers there "dedicate to their vineyards and wine a care and effort that are not found in many zones of the Rioja where the vine is a secondary crop" (1984:58). But inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa also depend on incomes from other sources, and have been subject to the same structure of dependency on industrial wineries as growers in the autonomous community of Rioja. The differences in the number of small growers who make and or market wine in the two Riojas is probably due more to the economic advantages Rioja Alavesa had under Franco, and have now, as part of the autonomous community of the Basque Country. The emphasis on the Ebro as political boundary by the governments of the autonomous communities also fosters interpretations and representations of the wine-producing sub-zones as distinct.

The influence of these interpretations and representations on individuals and communities in Rioja Alavesa will be analyzed in the next two chapters. Although the political boundary of the provinces, and now, of the autonomous communities, has often meant that economic policies varied, all of the Riojan wine districts have been subject to the historical developments of the industry. The wine industry, evolving through relationships with French and Basque entrepreneurs in the 1800s, and more recently, relying on the investment of transnational corporations, has fostered the Riojanos' integration into, and dependence upon, the international market. The development of the vineyards and grapes as largely a monocrop in some zones, such as Rioja Alta and Rioja Alavesa, has made the economy more vulnerable to natural disaster as well as to political and economic conditions of the larger sector. Destruction of the vineyards by phylloxera in the early part of the century, decline of the vineyards during the Civil War, and their failure to recover under Franco's autarkic economic policies, forced the emigration of many--from all of the Riojas--mostly to industrial centers in the other Basque provinces, over the years. The landless laborers and small-holders who had to gain all or part of their livelihoods from working for the larger landowners, or in the industrial bodegas or other industries, led hard and meager lives until very recently.

For good or ill, the development of the wine industry in the Riojas has touched the lives of most of the inhabitants in some way. The "identity" with the wine is not simply a result of pride in a now internationally known product or of intimate knowledge of the land and lifeways associated with growing grapes, but is also partly borne of this history of dependence, exploitation and struggle. Still, people from all walks of life in the Riojas did show pride in this famous product of their lands. Returned and visiting migrants and tourists often romanticize village life and the work of the vineyards. The grape motif is evident in local architecture; daily language and conversation are replete with the vocabulary and themes of grape growing, wine making and wine selling; local fiestas are held to celebrate the grape harvest and the wine; and the wine itself is a daily accompaniment to work, meals and social life. The wine and customs associated with it are also increasingly used as symbols of regional identity by officials and scholars of both the Riojan and Basque autonomous communities.

I identified the viti-vinicultural lifeway as one of the three contexts of local identity (along with language and the pueblo), which have been influenced by Rioja Alavesa's incorporation into the autonomous Basque community. In the next two chapters, I will discuss evidence of changing perceptions and representations of the

viti-vinicultural lifeway in the neighboring autonomous communities. I also found that people identify with the vine and wine not just on a general regional level, but also, at the pueblo level. For example, people in specific pueblos might practice slightly different customs of viti-viniculture than people in other pueblos; many boast that their pueblo produces the best wine, etc. The inter-relationships of these identities are analyzed in Chapters Six and Seven.

Prior to discussing Basque influence on vine-wine, pueblo, and linguistic identities in Rioja Alavesa, the evolution of Basque ethnic ideology needs to be examined. Then, the inquiry into whether and how this ideology is changing to facilitate the incorporation of diverse groups such as the Rioja Alaveses, can be made. In the following chapter, I describe the development of Basque ethnic ideology, the ideological adaptations I observed in Rioja Alavesa, and local perceptions and stereotypes of who is and is not Basque. Most of the ethnographic data in the next chapter illustrate Rioja Alaveses' perceptions of being different from "true Basques." In contrast, data in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight illumine processes of change which may eventually result in many people of Rioja Alavesa identifying themselves more as Basques than Riojanos.

CHAPTER 5  
WHO ARE THE BASQUES? ETHNIC IDEOLOGY IN RIOJA ALAVESA

Why an Ethnic Ideology?

The ethnic ideology of what it means to be a Basque is largely based on selected social and cultural characteristics of the northern Basque provinces. Thus, as Greenwood notes, "the unambiguous core area of the Basque Country, then, is Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and the mountainous northern zones of Navarre" (1977:83). Caro Baroja describes most of Alava and Navarra as "marginal areas" of the Basque Country (1986:25-26). Most studies of Basques have focused on the core areas.

As an ethnic group moves to an ethnic nation, an ethnic ideology is needed to coalesce allegiance and define boundaries, as discussed in Chapter Two (Rothschild 1981, Smith 1986, Cohen 1982). Ethnic leaders aspiring to political independence, autonomy, or increased bargaining powers for their ethnic group use such "nation-building" strategies as idealization of language, past history, traditional lifeways and other distinguishing customs to both define the group's boundaries and to provide the ideological foundation for an in-group identity. Isajiw describes the construction of an ethnic ideology as a selection process:

Persistence of ethnic identity is not necessarily related to the perpetuation of traditional ethnic culture. Rather, it may depend more on the emergence of ethnic "rediscoverers," i.e., persons from any consecutive ethnic generation who have been socialized into the culture of the general society but who develop a symbolic relation to the culture of their ancestors. Even relatively few items from the cultural past, such as folk art, music, can become symbols of ethnic identity. Significantly, there seems to be a process of selection of items from the cultural past and rather than accepting the entire baggage of ethnic tradition, persons from consecutive ethnic generations show a degree of freedom in choosing such items from the cultural past of their ancestors which correspond to their needs created perhaps by the specific character of relations in society as a whole. (Isajiw 1974: 121)

Since Rioja Alavesa was not part of the culture on which definitions of Basqueness were based, this heterogeneity poses problems for defining Basque identity as the Basque nation expands. But, if the processual perspective is valid, adaptations in the ethnic ideology which promote inclusion of areas such as Rioja Alavesa in the ethnic nation should be detectable.

Another critical issue to keep in mind when discussing ethnic ideology is the different epistemological bases of various notions of ethnicity. The "commonsense" or "folk" notions used by actors themselves may not match analytic models used by those who study ethnic groups. The actors identify individuals based on certain cues (e.g. race, language, place of birth), assign them to a group, and then have a set of expectations regarding the individual's behavior. Analytic explanations are based on abstract models of the ethnic group (Mitchell 1974). A third basis

for defining and interpreting the ethnic group is the ethnic leaders' articulation of ethnic ideologies. Like scholars of ethnicity, ethnic leaders draw from folk and commonsense models to formulate more formal statements about the identity of the group vis-à-vis others in the society. Historians, ethnographers, archeologists, linguists and other scholars often provide data used in defining and representing ethnic groups.

The ethnic ideology is not only the product of the conscious efforts of ethnic leaders and intellectuals, but of the interactions of ideas and behaviors at the folk level as well. The two interpretations, the "folk" and "elite", are not necessarily congruent on all points. For example, although the official boundary of the autonomous Basque community incorporates Rioja Alavesa, and Basque leaders hope to promote Basque identity in this zone, the actual patterns of relationships between the people of Rioja Alavesa and Basques from the northern provinces continue to distinguish, rather than to unite, the two groups. These relationships may prove a counter force to Rioja Alaveses' perceiving themselves to be equal members of the Basque community.

The complexity and ambiguities of the processes of expansion of Basque identification to Rioja Alavesa cannot be underestimated. Basque elements are being reinterpreted and integrated into local contexts--sometimes in very

conscious ritual displays, sometimes in subtle adjustments in daily activities. Prior to closer analysis of these processes in the next three chapters, the evolution of Basque ethnic ideology and perceptions of Basqueness in Rioja Alavesa are discussed below.

### Evolution of Basque Ethnic Ideology

In Chapter Three, I examined how Basques' relations with the developing Spanish nation state influenced the evolution of perceptions of Basque identity. The recognition of the Basque fueros and the granting of collective nobility by the Catholic monarchs in the fifteenth century set the foundation for Basque articulations of a distinct identity (Greenwood 1977). At the end of the nineteenth century, Basque nationalists drew upon the heritage of the fueros and collective nobility, along with the unique language of Euskera and the lifeways associated with the caseríos of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and northern Navarra, to distinguish Basques. Although the province of Alava was granted the privilege of maintaining fueros as were the other Spanish Basque provinces, Alava only minimally shared in the other bases for defining Basque identity. Only a few northern valley areas of Alava were granted collective nobility, and Euskera had been eclipsed by Castilian in all but a few northern border zones of the province. Settlement patterns and lifeways in much of rural Alava differ from those associated with the caseríos of the



north and resemble the nuclear settlement patterns found in most of Spain.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the formal Basque nationalist movement started by Sabino de Arana y Goiri was catalyzed by the rapid industrialization of the Basque city of Bilbao from 1870 to 1890. With the influx of immigrant workers from other regions of Spain, including unemployed vine and wine workers from the Riojas, Basque "otherness" became a focus of nationalist ideology. Arana, notes Urla, "proclaimed the Basques to be a separate race plagued by contamination from foreign workers and abandoned by its hispanicized capitalistic oligarchy" (Urla 1987: 38). Arana contended that the Basques were natural descendants of a prehistoric race who had forged a culture and language still conserved in the caserios, a race "noble, singular and primitive" (Azcona 1984: 110).

For Arana and the early nationalists, Basqueness was based on ancestry, confirmed through genealogy, and symbolized by one's last name. The purity of one's blood and degree of Basqueness could be measured by the number of Basque surnames one possessed. Preservation of Euskera was not the focus of Arana and the early nationalists. The primary requirement for claiming Basque identity was the ancestral component, as proven by Basque surnames. However, in Arana's proscriptions against Basque marriage to non-Basques, he showed more concern about contamination from the

"decadent" moral values of Spaniards than about the intermingling of biological traits. In the Aranist formulations of Basque identity, one had to be born "of the race," and marriage out was viewed as a diluter--Basqueness could not be acquired (Urla 1987:38).

Heiberg ponders whether Arana's lack of emphasis on Euskera as a primary determinant of Basqueness was partly due to the fact that he, and most of his disciples, had to learn the language as adults. She notes that Arana was uncomfortable with the traditional Euskera words for the Basque Country, Euskalherria, which means 'the country of the people who speak Euskera.' Therefore, technically speaking, says Heiberg,

most of the early nationalists would not have qualified as proper residents of the Basque Country. . . . Arana solved the problem by taking the stem, euzko, which according to him meant the Basque race, and adding the suffix -di, which meant locality. Thus Euzkadi was designed to mean 'the place of the Basque race'" (Heiberg 1989:60).

Arana's invention of the term Euzkadi indicates his focus on race as a primary marker of Basqueness.

Concomitant with the rise of Basque nationalism, numerous cultural associations formed in the late nineteenth century which promoted archeological, ethnographic, linguistic and folkloric studies of Basques. Similar movements in other European countries at this time contributed to articulations of national identities and to the establishment of centers for folkloric and ethnographic

research. A group of Basque scholars, politicians and professionals held the first Congress of Basque Studies in the small town of Oñate in Guipúzcoa in 1918. Although many of these men favored some form of Basque autonomy, they did not, Urla notes, all "share in the virulent traditionalism of Aranist nationalism" (Urla 1987:33). This group viewed their task as not just one of investigating origins and forms of Basque identity, but of promoting modern scientific measures to preserve and renew Basque society. Adapting to the changing times, and improving basic life conditions, were seen as necessary measures to preserving Basque cultural and biological identity in the midst of rapid industrialization and the consequent ills of overcrowding and pollution in Basque cities (Ibid.).

Between 1918 and 1933, the Basque Studies Society fostered programs and policies for urban renewal, health and education programs, and social insurance, which Urla details in her dissertation; as well as scholarly journals and conferences on Basque-related topics. The Basque Studies Society and the Basque Language Academy were founded at the 1918 Congress. Urla describes the goals of these organizations:

Basques began turning the analytical techniques of the human sciences upon themselves by dividing up the study of Basqueness into six fields: race, language, history, art, education, and social and political systems . . . In each field, experts sought to identify what was peculiarly Basque, provide a list of recommendations for future areas of research, and

indicate possible applications of their findings for the improvement of society. (Urla 1987: 35)

Anthropometrists, for example, were not only interested in studying Basques as a racial type, but in promoting a healthy race. They worked with doctors and health officials to encourage hygiene and sanitation. Also, with the implementation of mass education and mass conscription in the late nineteenth century, required medical examinations provided a large body of data on "medical histories, cranial dimensions, eye color and body types" which were used in the study of physical traits (Urla 1987:47-48). Basque scholars and planners wanted to utilize the latest scientific methods in their investigations and applications. These ethnic leaders were not motivated by purely political aims, but also by a commitment to fostering a healthy Basque race and society. The pollution, overcrowding and disease of the urban environment influenced these goals. Rioja Alavesa was far removed from these activities.

In the early years of this century, anthropometrist Aranzadi described a "typical" Basque physical type, distinguished especially by head and nose size and shape. He characterized Basques as mesocephalic, with a particularly long and narrow facial skeleton, with orthognathism, or absence of forward protrusion of the jaws, a distinctive bulging of the temples and upper occipital, and a long, narrow nose (Azcona 1984:60). Shortly after

World War I, Aranzadi joined Basque archeologist, J. M. Barandiarán, in excavating a number of dolmens from around 2,000 B. C. The skeletal remains they found suggested physical characteristics similar to those found in Aranzadi's studies of modern Basques. In the 1930s, the team uncovered a skull dating from about 10,000 B.C. which indicated several Basque traits. This skull is used as evidence that the Basques might be direct descendants of Cro-Magnon man (Aranzadi and Barandiarán 1948).

Following discoveries in serology during the 1940s, blood type was added to the list of distinctive Basque traits as studies showed a preponderance of blood type O, and a lower proportion of blood types B and AB, among some Basque groups than are found among other Europeans. More significantly, a higher percentage of Rhesus negative (Rh-) was found in a series of studies of Basques. These studies have been used to support the arguments that Basques are not related to other Europeans, but are descended from a prehistoric group that inhabited the zone (Azcona 1984:58, Heiberg 1989:14). Some scholars are skeptical of such claims--Collins, for example, contends that lack of correspondence of blood type to any uniform skull type questions the extent of a separate Basque "race" (Collins 1986: 4-5). These data are controversial. Most blood testing was done in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, and I have no

data regarding skeletal measurement or blood typing from Rioja Alavesa.

J. M. Barandiarán is the best known Basque archeologist and has devoted a lifetime to the study of prehistory in the Basque region and to investigations of Basque identity (Barandiarán 1953, 1980). He hypothesizes that the racial/cultural group ancestral to modern Basques dates to at least 7,000 years ago and that a continuity with these prehistoric Basques is evidenced in some customs of contemporary rural Basque life:

The proof that we can consider this culture as Basque Barandiarán finds in the survivals that still endure, or that endured until recently, in contemporary Basque culture. These survivals are the hunt "por ojeo" (by beating for game), the boiling of milk by using red-hot stones, the placing of a hearth in a hole in the ground, shepherd's use of a form of sheepskin jacket, amulets of beads of crystal, or teeth of horse or wild boar, and the general manner of the religious artistic representations dramatizing Basque mythology. (Azcona 1984:66)

Other cultural features of rural Basque life, such as legends, myths, stories, dances, songs and sports, were collected and documented by ethnographers and folklorists.

The cultural survivals Barandiarán found in contemporary rural Basque culture, as well as the ethnographic and folkloric data, are based on the rural life of the caserío (baserria in Euskera), or independent farmstead, which is the characteristic rural settlement pattern of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, northern Navarra and some northern border zones of Alava. The caseríos came to

represent the healthy and uncorrupted repositories of Basque values and folk wisdom in comparison to the industrializing cities with their increasingly mixed populations. In addition, the dispersed settlement pattern of scattered caseríos contrasts to the nucleated village settlement pattern found in most of the rest of rural Spain, including Rioja Alavesa. Also, the inheritance system of the caseríos is impartible--only one child inherits the small farmstead. This practice, according to Heiberg (1975), fosters an independent, entrepreneurial work ethic among Basques. Partible inheritance is the norm in much of the rest of the country, including Rioja Alavesa. The lifeways of shepherding and fishing, also associated with rural Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, are often cited as traditional "Basque" lifeways. Thus, a complex of markers of Basque identity is based on the rural life of the caseríos.

Finally, the Basque language has been a primary focus of investigations. Thought to be unrelated to any other known language family, this unique language further supports Basque claims of not being related to other Europeans. While earlier language studies focused on the language's origins, dialects and grammatical structure, language concerns expanded to issues of standardization of the language and pedagogical concerns of teaching it. Urla (1987) describes the social history of Euskera in detail and analyzes the emergence of the Basque language as the primary

marker of Basque identity since the 1950s. She proposes that the adoption of scientific language planning policies and programs by the current Basque autonomous government is an indication of the systematization and bureaucratization of defining and promoting a Basque identity.

A focus on language as a primary marker of Basque identity makes the identity more accessible because, unlike physical and biological features, a caserio heritage, or a Basque surname, language can be learned. As one schoolboy in Rioja Alavesa told me, he hopes, through studying the language, that he may "become a good Basque in some years." This brief review of the evolution of a Basque ethnic ideology confirms Rioja Alavesa's isolation from the process. It also indicates the changing foci of the ideology since Arana's formulations, which were based more on ancestral and racial distinctions. As Isajiw (1974) noted, those features selected to represent the ethnic group may change with the needs of succeeding generations and with the group's relations to the changing larger society. The policy of promoting the knowledge and use of Euskera in Rioja Alavesa is one means of extending to the next generation of Rioja Alaveses one of the primary indicators of Basqueness.

Less obvious adaptations in Basque ideology also contribute to the expansion of "Basque identity" to include Rioja Alaveses. For example, historical interpretation and



idealization of the wine culture by leaders and scholars of both the Basque and Riojan autonomous communities tend to distinguish Rioja Alavesa from the rest of the Riojas, and to emphasize the Ebro as the boundary dividing the Basque Country from Spain.

### Adaptations in Ethnic Ideology

#### Historical Interpretations

The formation of the autonomous communities from 1979 through 1983 has been accompanied by the publication of books, articles, journals and tourist-oriented brochures which relate the history, cultural heritage, geography and "traditions" of the areas defined by the boundaries of the autonomous communities. Scholarly investigations are funded by the autonomous governments and by regional financial institutions such as the Cajas Provincial de Ahorros (provincial savings banks). Not only the Basques, but leaders of the sixteen other autonomous communities are seeking to articulate unique cultural and historical heritages with which inhabitants can identify and distinguish themselves from people in other autonomous communities. For example, the president of the Friends of the Rioja, a group promoting historical preservation and cultural conservation in the autonomous community of Rioja states:

If our fundamental objective is to affirm and exalt the collective identity of the Riojanos, it has always seemed to us that one of the best ways to win this is to recover for our people the historical memory which

is the reason for our personality and its possibilities. This memory has been half-hidden due to the double pressure of our own negligence and of the centralist yoke. (Resaltar La Conexión de La Autonomía Riojana con La Suerte General de la Democracia Española 1982:7)

A potential problem in such efforts is the lack of correspondence between the political boundaries of the communities and of the cultures and geographies which do not neatly "fit" within these boundaries. For example, although Rioja Alavesa is closely related to neighboring Castilian Rioja (e.g. the autonomous community of Rioja) in its history, cultural heritage, characteristic lifeway and geography; most recent publications about the autonomous community of Rioja exclude Rioja Alavesa because it lies beyond the political boundary of the Riojan community. Grillo notes, "the constant interpretation and re-interpretation of history is called to the aid of 'Our' identity" (Grillo 1980:11).

Separate treatment and different interpretations of the history of the Riojas on either side of the Ebro are serving to differentiate the zones. For example, although Basque presence and the speaking of Euskera during the medieval era have been documented in the area of the autonomous community of Rioja, this Basque influence is not emphasized in most historical interpretations of the autonomous community of Rioja. Instead, most recent commentators on "Riojan" history (Perez Arrondo 1982, Sáinz Ripa 1982, Valero 1983)

focus on the multi-cultural nature of the prehistory and history of the area and conclude that diverse influences have combined to give the zone its unique character:

The essence of the Rioja, its identity, so enthusiastically sought in these times, is totally contrary to closedness and isolation. The Rioja has always been a place of the clashing and fusing of cultures and diverse modes of life. And this is precisely what constitutes its singularity and its identity. This is Rioja's wealth. (Resaltar La Conexión de La Autonomía Riojana Con La Suerte General de la Democracia Española 1982:7)

Historical data are used by some to depict Rioja as a center for the birth of a Spanish nationality (Leach 1974, Merino Urrutia 1978). This interpretation is based on two factors. Rioja was one of the first zones to be won back from the Moors in the Reconquest. Also, Rioja is known as the "Cuna del Castellano" (Cradle of Castilian) because the Castilian vernacular was first written down at the end of the tenth century at the Riojan monastery of San Millán. A series of 143 marginal notes were written there by an anonymous monk (Guerrero Martín 1975:42-44). It has been de-emphasized in interpretations of a "Riojan" history that this same monk wrote two of these marginal notes in a dialect of Euskera. This evidence of the monk's bilingualism indicates that some form of Euskera was spoken in the area at the time. Although untranslatable, the notes in Euskera are the first written example of that language.

Historical interpretations of Rioja which portray the area as influenced by a variety of peoples and cultures, or

which suggest the importance of the area to the development of the Spanish nation, are written from a different perspective than Basque separatist oriented interpretations of the history of Rioja Alavesa. Basque ideology is based on Basque distinction from the Spanish, and the Basques are often represented as repulsing various invaders while maintaining their own culture and language. For example, in a book of statistics on the Basque Country, published for public consumption in several languages by the autonomous Basque government, the following statement is made:

For thousands of years the Basques have lived practically isolated from other peoples, who have never succeeded in controlling this territory and for this reason the Basques have kept their own language, personality and customs. (1984 Panorama 1985:21)

Rioja Alavesa, however, is a part of the Basque Country which has been undeniably subjected to a variety of outside influences throughout its history. Palacios (1978), who favors a Basque identity for Rioja Alavesa, posits that prehistoric Basques inhabited the area. He contends that the successive waves of foreign invaders diluted Basque identity:

The Rioja was freed of Roman and Arab domination, and then the Route of Santiago was opened, another important cultural influence that depersonalized the comarca of its Basque talent . . . the lands of the Sonsierra de Cantabria were the victim of these influences. (Palacios 1968:60-62)

Varying interpretations of Riojan history contribute to differing representations of "regional" identity. For those who attempt to define a "Riojano" personality, the mix of

cultural influences is viewed in a positive light as contributing to general traits of the Riojano as hospitable, forthright and outgoing. The evidence of Basques in the zone is briefly mentioned as but one among a variety of influences, or, not mentioned at all in interpretations aimed at defining a distinct Riojan heritage. For other authors, like Palacios, who attempt to reconcile the history of Rioja Alavesa with a separatist interpretation of Basque history, the influences of other cultures are viewed as destructive to a Basque identity in the zone. It follows from this latter interpretation that Basque identity can be recuperated in Rioja Alavesa.

Some authors have also noted elements of Basque heritage in the autonomous community of Rioja. For example, in a recent four volume work describing traditions and customs of the Basque Country, Feliú Corcuera (1987) concludes that several of the most colorful and famous festivals and rituals of villages and towns within the autonomous community of Rioja evolved due to Basque influence in the zone. These are: Los Picaos de San Vicente de la Sonsierra (The Penitents of San Vicente, an Easter Passional procession); San Felices de Bilibio, also known as Batalla del Vino (Battle of the Wine) of the town of Haro; Santa Magdalena de Anquiano; famous for unusual stilt dancing performances by local men; and San Cosme y San Damian en Arnedo. Feliú Corcuera incorporates these popular

events into the calendar of festivals of the Basque Country based on the following evidence. The abundance of Basque toponyms in the zone, especially the mountainous region where Anguiano is located, attests to Basque presence there in the past and therefore, claims Feliú Corcuera, early Basques "probably" originated the now famous stilt dance of Anguino. Also, he notes that most of the Rioja was part of the Kingdom of Navarra, which he interprets as having been Basque. Feliú Corcuera also states that San Felices, the patron saint of the town of Haro, was a Basque saint (1987:19-20). Several festivals of Rioja Alavesa are also presented in these volumes. Feliú Corcuera incorporates not only Rioja Alavesa as part of the Basque Country, but goes beyond the political boundaries of the Basque provinces to include several of the most touristic events of the autonomous community of Rioja as part of "Basque" tradition.

These events are also touted by leaders and authors of the autonomous community of Rioja as uniquely "Riojan" traditions which help define a Riojan identity (Lope de Toledo 1984, Elías Pasor 1982c). I attended the fiestas of Anguiano and Haro and saw the Picaos of San Vicente during 1985. I found no evidence that the local people who plan and enact these traditions associate them with a Basque heritage. Rather, the rituals are perceived and presented as expressions of village and town level identity and pride. Inhabitants of the autonomous community of Rioja are also

generally proud of a regional identity as Riojanos, and usually distinguish themselves as a different people from their Basque neighbors. The political boundary of the Ebro now promotes different historical interpretations of Rioja's past.

The interpretations and symbolic significance of the name Rioja itself illumine the debate. The name first appeared in the Fueros of the town of Miranda in 1099. Its' etiology remains controversial. Some (Rittwagen 1921, Palacios 1978) claim it evolved from the Basque words, erri-oi, which translates to "terreno de pan" ("land of bread"). Rittwagen (1921) hypothesizes that Basques gave the area this name because the fertile valley served as their granary since their humid mountains precluded intensive cultivation of cereal crops. Others posit that the name is derived from the name of a tributary of the Ebro, the Rio Oja, so named due to the abundance of hojas (leaves) of the trees lining its banks (García Prado 1952:326). This debate leaves the etiology of the name open to interpretations which either emphasize or de-emphasize Basque influence in the zone.

Rioja is also the official name for the wines made throughout the geographic grape-growing zone which overlaps the borders of the autonomous communities. The controversy over the adoption of the name "Rioja" by the former province of Logroño in 1982 to designate the province's transition to autonomous community status, is indicative of the importance

of the association of this name with the famous wines. Many in Rioja Alavesa accuse their neighbors across the river of trying to associate the Riojan wines exclusively with their autonomous community. One grower expressed the confusion this name change has caused to people in Rioja Alavesa:

It's only been a few years that it was called the province of Logroño. And now Logroño has been very clever, at least for the wine--they say, "We are not the province of Logroño, we are the province of Rioja." But the Rioja was not any province--the Rioja was a zone that bordered both banks of the River Ebro. The Rioja as a province, it's not like that--it was part Navarra, part Alava, part Logroño, but it wasn't a province. And now, the province of Logroño turns out to be the Rioja--for the theme of the wine.

The name change was challenged in court by the provincial government of Alava prior to 1982, but this legal action did not succeed in reversing Logroño's choice of the name Rioja to designate its' autonomous community.

The controversy and confusion regarding the name Rioja indicates the importance of the wine and culture and lifeways associated with it for economy and identity throughout the Riojas. The previous chapter pointed out how economic assistance to local growers differs in the neighboring autonomous communities. In addition, in efforts to consolidate cultural identity and allegiance, leaders of both the autonomous communities of the Rioja and of the Basque Country are appropriating the symbolism of the wine culture and associating it with the zones within their respective political boundaries. Thus, growers in Rioja



Alavesa become "Basque" grape-growers while those across the river remain "Riojanos."

The Symbolism of the Wine Culture in Rioja and The Basque Country:

The surviving family-run commercial wineries, established in the last century or early in this century, and centered mostly in the town of Haro in the autonomous community of Rioja, perpetuate a traditionalist image of wine making by producing high quality wines aged mostly in oak barrels. These wineries, and the few household wineries still in existence, serve as important symbols in marketing for the entire Riojan wine industry (Parrish 1984). Representations in publications and tourist brochures published by the Basque and Riojan autonomous communities also use images of traditional wine production in spite of the modernization of these processes in the industrial wineries. I found very similar use of the traditional, hand-made methods of Harris tweed production by the local government of the Western Isles of Scotland in promoting tourism and local pride (Hendry 1983, 1989). Traditional workways associated with the rural values and local folk knowledge of a particular group are frequently used as ethnic markers in formulating ethnic ideologies, even when the traditional workways are no longer practiced by the majority.

An idealized wine culture is being promoted as a primary symbol of identity of the autonomous community of

Rioja. The week-long Fiesta de La Vendimia Riojana (Fiesta of the Riojan Grape Harvest) was instigated by the Ayuntamiento of the City of Logroño in 1957 to coincide with the fiesta of the patronal saint of the city, San Mateo, whose saint's day falls on September 21. In establishing the concurrent Fiesta de La Vendimia, the city aimed to recognize and celebrate Rioja's association with its famous product and the vitivinicultural lifeway. The Riojan grape harvest also begins in late September. The autonomous community of Rioja continues the tradition of the harvest fiesta, but organizers of the event, and leaders of the autonomous community, increasingly associate the name Rioja and the wine culture with the autonomous community of Rioja, excluding the other wine-producing subzones. The president of Rioja opened the 1985 Fiesta de La Vendimia with the following dedication of the first mosto (unfermented grape juice) of the season:

Above all, this mosto is a symbol above other symbols. With this we can say that we have worked, that the sweat of our brow unifies our experience, and that we know that it connects us with the natural environment in which we are born, to which we belong and conform, and that we have been faithful to what we are and to what we know how to do . . . In offering this mosto, I lift it to all of you in my hands, and I am proud and honored to be elected to do so. I am offering work and joy, rain and sun, fears and hopes, and definitively, that which marks and entitles us as Riojanos.

The opening parade of the fiesta includes children, dressed in local folk costumes, carrying baskets of grapes. Following the speech, grapes are ritually pressed by two

men, brothers from a Riojan village. Dressed in local folk costume and barefoot, these men press the grapes in a traditional wooden barrel, on stage, before a crowd of thousands of cheering onlookers. The wine becomes the unifying symbol for the autonomous community of Rioja, even though a minority of the population of the autonomous community rely on viti-viniculture for their livelihoods.

Another fiesta which celebrates the wine is the Romeria y Batalla del Vino (Pilgrimage and Battle of the Wine), which takes place on June 29 as part of the fiesta of San Felices de Bilibio in the town of Haro. Haro is the home of a number of the originally established commercial bodegas and is considered the wine capital of the Riojas. The pilgrimage is to the hermitage of Saint Felices de Bilibio whose statue graces a craggy mountaintop several kilometers outside of the town. The pilgrimage is also a "battle" of wine as the merry pilgrims douse each other from leather botas and spraying canisters as they walk up the hillside track. Once there, the "fighting" continues as people picnic and dance in a mountain grove, and as their white pilgrim's clothing turns crimson from the wine battle. Most of Haro's population of 8,000 probably attend, in addition to many visitors. An estimated 10,000 joined the bacchanalian revelry in 1987. The Battle has become a popular tourist attraction and makes a strong statement about the identity of Riojanos with wine to both locals and

visitors. As noted earlier, Feliú Corcuera includes this event as a "tradition and custom of the Basque Country" (1987). Most Riojanos would probably disagree with his interpretation. Both the wine, and some of the rituals celebrating the wine and associated lifeways, are being used in a "Battle for Symbols" engaged in by the Riojan and Basque autonomous communities.

Not only is the wine complex used as a primary symbol in defining the identity of the autonomous community of Rioja, the political community is now being used as a symbol in some wine marketing schemes. For example, a nationally broadcast television commercial of one of the industrial wineries depicts a large family enjoying a picnic and wine outside of a quaint farmhouse. The scene then changes to a view of lush vineyards over which a gigantic flag of the autonomous community of Rioja is unfurled, with a voice over to the effect of "if it's from Rioja, you know it's a quality wine."

Across the Ebro, Basque authorities are associating the wine culture in Rioja Alavesa with Basque identity. The independent grape growers and small winery owners of Rioja Alavesa can be associated with the idealization of rural values of the caseríos that is part of the Basque heritage. As Basque author Busca Isusi notes in a book about the wines of Rioja Alavesa:

We have left for last the most important factor--the man. This is the basic factor, that which has made

possible that upon this poor and damaged earth we could have the miracle of the wine that is of a very special form in our Rioja Alavesa. The inhabitant of this zone of the Country is, like a good Basque, strong, vigorous, patient and hard-working, knowing how to combine these characteristics with an open spirit, expansive and hospitable. To recognize these virtues, it suffices to see the work of the vineyards and to open one's heart to their happy fiestas. But this list of the undoubted qualities of the viticultor-vinicultor of our Rioja Alavesa remains incomplete if we do not mention the sensibility and artistic feeling that is put into the pampering with which he cares for the vines and the loving care put into the vinification. This artisan's spirit comes to the viticultor of Rioja Alavesa from ancient times. (Busca Isusi 1979:14-15)

Anthropologist William Douglass provided another relevant example of the association of the wines of Rioja Alavesa with a Basque identity. He noted that in 1989, at the Basque Studies Center in Reno, Nevada, a statue of a Basque sheepherder was dedicated in honor of the many Basque herdsmen from the mountainous zones of the northern Basque provinces who settled in Nevada and continued shepherding. Dignitaries from the Spanish Basque Country attended the event. To Douglass' surprise, a contingent from the provincial government of Alava came to the ceremonies, with a good supply of wine from Rioja Alavesa to donate to the festivities. These representatives from Alava made an international symbolic gesture that wine from Rioja Alavesa is "Basque" wine. Douglass said he thought the grape growers of Rioja Alavesa could be fairly easily incorporated into the Basque idealization of "traditional" rural lifeways (Douglass: personal communication 1989).

One newsletter about wine found in a liquor store in Florida, U. S. A., depicted all of Rioja as part of the Basque Country:

Perhaps the best-bred wine of Spain available worldwide is Rioja. Rioja is Basque Country and the Basques are a very hardy people who like red meat and red wine. (Riojas of Spain 1988:1)

Such association of the wine with the Basque region may be part of an international marketing strategy. As the autonomous communities, especially the Basque Country, seek individual representation in the European Economic Community, such associations will influence international economic policy planning.

Another intriguing effort to correlate the wine culture to a Basque identity is exemplified by a unique project of the ikastola (bilingual school) in the Rioja Alaveses village of Lanciego. As a school project to encourage children to learn about their local customs and traditions, the students have participated in harvesting grapes and making a school wine, bottling and naming it themselves. They gave it a Basque name, Mordoxka, which means "little grape bunch." Then, the students were scheduled to appear on a Basque childrens' television program to explain, in Euskera, their project to other children of the Basque country. Here, children are taught that the wine culture is part of their heritage, and also, that they are Basques. The journalist who wrote the story about this project commented:

The presence before the cameras of the Alavese children conjures several interesting issues. They are trying to maintain a certain presence for Euskera in a zone where the language has been frankly nonexistent. Lanciego, although administratively part of Alava, has the focus of its' life towards Logroño. When the annual summer residents from Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa arrive, for example, the local inhabitants usually say unwittingly, "the Basques have arrived." (Los Alumnos de la Ikastola Alavesa de Lanciego Elaboran La primera 'Cosecha Infantil' de Rioja 1987:13)

This statement reflects the ambiguities of regional and ethnic identity in Rioja Alavesa. Although representation of the wine culture as part of Basque culture in media, advertising, tourist brochures and in the schools is indicative of a changing focus in Basque ethnic ideology to include Rioja Alavesa, the patterns of interaction between inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa and the northern Basque provinces tend to reinforce differences between the two groups. Most Basques from the north still consider those in Rioja Alavesa to be Riojanos; while most people in Rioja Alavesa said the "vasco vascos" (Basque Basques), or true Basques, were from Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, especially those from the caseríos and those who spoke Euskera. The wines carrying the name Rioja are still associated with the geographic wine district of Rioja by most of the general public.

Historical interpretation and appropriation of the symbolism of the wine culture are being used by both the autonomous communities of Rioja and the Basque Country in formulating ideologies with which citizens of the

communities may come to distinguish themselves from their neighbors. But the ethnic ideology of Basqueness which has associated Basque identity with the northern provinces for over a century is strongly entrenched in folk perceptions and reinforced in behavioral patterns. In the last section of this chapter, then, I describe observations of "folk" perceptions of identity in Rioja Alavesa and summarize the patterns of behavioral interactions between Rioja Alaveses and northern Basques which tend to reinforce notions of distinction.

#### Folk Perceptions of Ethnicity and Identity in Rioja Alavesa

##### Conflicting Views of Boundaries and Identities

To illustrate the variety of local interpretation of history and identity in Rioja Alavesa, I begin this section with a revealing conversation recorded between three individuals from the village of Elciego. While I was interviewing Pablo, aged 73 and his daughter Mari, 35, their neighbor, Victor, 42, dropped in. Mari had to leave a few minutes after Victor arrived. Her departure and his arrival during the middle of the interview exemplify the difficulty of "controlling" these family interview sessions. The following conversation also shows how peoples' diversions from the specific questions of the interview schedule often turned out to be the most valuable material recorded. I briefly explained my research to Victor when he came in, and asked him what he thought about Basque identity



in Rioja Alavesa. I had to do very little talking after that as he and Pablo and Mari began the following friendly argument:

Victor: I am Basque, clearly. And I am from Elciego.

Pablo: You could say, "Basque Riojano."

Victor: But it is my opinion that Elciego, Lapuebla, Baños, all of this zone (e.g. Rioja Alavesa), belonging to the Basque provinces, will always be Basque.

Mari: But more, half and half.

Victor: There is no half and half--how can that be? If I am born in Laguardia, I will tell you I am from Laguardia. But, if I am born in Elciego, then I am from Elciego.

Mari: Why then, when a woman of Elciego gives birth in Logroño, is the baby registered in Elciego? Explain that. So, we belong to the two zones.

Pablo: As far as customs and language, I am more Riojano.

Mari: This has been Rioja all my life.

Pablo: No, this has always been Rioja Alavesa.

Victor: But, if this is Alava, it's not Castilian Rioja.

Mari: Those from Logroño can't be from Rioja Alavesa.

Pablo: Well, then, why was this name of Rioja Alavesa given?

Victor: And who gave it?

Pablo: Someone who had power.

Victor: It's because the zone borders with the Rioja.

Mari: Not because it borders.

Pablo: It is because of the quality of the wine.

Mari: And because we have relations with Logroño -- the electricity, the telephone . . . . This is not in the middle of the zone of Logroño. It is the frontier.

Victor: This is divided more by the Ebro, more than the mountains. Four provinces meet at these mountains --Burgos, Alava, Navarra and Castile.

Pablo: The mountains divide us as Rioja Alavesa, and the Ebro divides the provinces.

Victor: The Ebro hugs one bank, which is all of Rioja Alavesa, and the other Rioja.

Pablo: Briñas, San Vicente, and that part of the Ebro --see what a mystery there is.

Victor: I understand that Briñas was part of Alava.

Pablo: And why was it removed?

Victor: Because it had some tributes that Alava did not pay for this pueblo. So they did not want to deal with this. So, Logroño paid the tributes, and took responsibility for the pueblo. So, it is part of Logroño.

Pablo: But this is commentary; there are polemics about this. These three pueblos were given up by Alava.

Victor: Over there you have Laguardia. Laguardia is part of Alava and, yet, has not been of Alava. It was part of Navarra.

Pablo: And all of this here was of Navarra. The king, I don't know when, grabbed all of this.

Victor: In this case, they had to form a realignment.

Pablo: Well, clearly, this was when there was a king in each province. The king of Aragon, of Castile and of Navarra.

Victor: The same with the Rioja Alavesa. I can tell you why this was done to Rioja Alavesa. Read the history of the Basque Country and there everything will be explained to you.

Pablo: I consider myself more Riojano than Basque because the customs here are different from the Basque

country, because we share more with people from Rioja than with people from the Basque Country.

This discussion reveals locals' varying interpretations of the complex history and regional identity of Rioja Alavesa--in the end Victor refers me to a history book to get a final explanation. Countering his efforts to identify Rioja Alavesa as a separate and distinct geographic and administrative zone from the autonomous community of Rioja, Mari and Pablo note exceptions to his arguments. Victor relates identity to place of birth--you identify with the region in which the pueblo or town you were born in is located. But, Mari reminds him that many women of Elciego, and of other villages in Rioja Alavesa, go to the hospital in Logroño to deliver their babies--so, the children are born across the border, in the autonomous community of Rioja, although their births are now registered in Elciego (they were registered as being born in Logroño until 1985). This indicates to her that these children are of both zones--"mitad-mitad" (half and half), as she said.

Later in the discussion, Victor argues that the river is a more important boundary than the mountains in distinguishing Rioja Alavesa because it is the Ebro which divides the Basque province of Alava and the former province of Logroño (now the autonomous community of Rioja). Pablo reminds him of the exceptions to this river boundary--for there are three villages on the Alava side of the Ebro--Briñas, San Vicente and Abalos, which are part of the

autonomous community of Rioja, not part of Alava and the Basque Country. Also, Pablo states that although the Ebro may divide the provinces (with the exception of the three villages mentioned), he considers that the mountains form a boundary for Rioja Alavesa as a distinct zone.

For both Pablo and his daughter Mari, administrative inconsistencies provide some basis for their identity as both Riojanos and Alaveses--"mitad-mitad," or "Vasco-Riojano." Pablo also says that customs and language of Rioja Alavesa are more similar to those of their neighbors across the river in the autonomous community of Rioja than to those of the Basque Country, making him identify more as a Riojano than a Basque. Mari notes that Logroño provides hospital services and utilities to Elciego, and many women of Elciego deliver their babies in the Logroño hospital. She sees the provision of such services as another basis for commonality with Castilian Rioja.

When discussing why the zone was named "Rioja Alavesa," Pablo cites the wine, made on both sides of the Ebro, which is generally known as Riojan wine. Pablo concludes by saying that people in Rioja Alavesa have more interchange with their neighbors across the river than with those on the other side of the mountains. His son-in-law, Mari's husband, for example, is from a village just across the river. I knew numerous people of Rioja Alavesa whose spouses were from the autonomous community of Rioja.

Victor defended a Basque identity for Rioja Alavesa, in contrast to Pablo and Mari's favoring of a Riojan identity, and attempted to clarify to them Rioja Alavesa's status as part of the Basque Country. In reviewing local history with Pablo, however, Victor notes that Laguardia, although now part of Alava, was originally of Navarra. Pablo agrees that the whole area of Rioja Alavesa used to be Navarrese. They both view Navarra as distinct from the Basque Country.

Victor is seeking a historical solution to regional identity for Rioja Alavesa--one based on political, administrative boundaries. He did not use arguments based on a historical isolation of Basques from other groups, or espouse ideological or patriotic sentiments about being Basque--rather, he defined himself as Basque based on the administrative boundary of the Ebro which includes Rioja Alavesa in the Basque Country. Mari and Pablo downplay administrative divisions and focus on cultural and social commonalities with the autonomous community of Rioja and on Rioja Alavesa's dependence on services from Logroño in defining themselves as Riojanos, or "Basque - Riojanos," "half and half." The patterns of interactions between Rioja Alaveses and Basques from the northern provinces have served to perpetuate regional and ethnic stereotypes which people use to distinguish northern Basques from inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa.

Rioja Alaveses and Northern Basques: Patterns of Interaction and Perceptions of Identity

One of the primary means of contact between Rioja Alaveses and Basques from the northern provinces has been through migration. As discussed in the previous chapter, many from Rioja Alavesa have sought work in the industrial cities of the north since early in the century. I knew several elderly return migrants who had worked in Bilbao or San Sebastian before World War II, as well as numerous younger people who had worked in the cities in more recent decades. I also knew people who currently live and work in Bilbao, Vitoria or San Sebastian but who return to Rioja Alavesa for weekends and holidays. The majority of these return migrants and current migrants said they were identified as "Riojanos" by native Basques of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, and that they usually identified themselves as Riojanos. Several people said they were often referred to as "maketos," the derogatory nickname given to immigrant workers by some natives of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa (see Appendix A).

Several migrants reported excellent relations with the northern Basques. For example, Ramon, now in his fifties, runs a restaurant in San Sebastian. He told me that although he was labeled a Riojano by his northern Basque customers, and had identified himself as such, he has developed a love for the city that has treated him so well economically, and has come to think of himself as a Basque.

His wife, Cati, also a native of Rioja Alavesa, said she still considers herself a "Riojana." The couple maintain a holiday home in Lapuebla and strong affective ties with friends and family in the village, but they have also developed friendships in San Sebastian during their twenty-two years there. Their daughter has married a native Guipúzcoan, and the couple are pleased that their grandchildren will learn Euskera. I recorded the following conversation with them regarding their migration to San Sebastian and their identity as Basques:

Ramon: Here, when I was young, there were practically no opportunities. My family was the poorest in the village. They had only a few vineyards and those were bad, very bad--much work and little production. . . . We lived bad in the past--they wouldn't let us live well--between the rich people, the Guardia Civil, and the priests, we lived the worst. We went to San Sebastian with our two year old daughter and have made a good living there.

Barbara: When you went to San Sebastian, did people there consider you were Basques?

Ramon: No.

Cati: No, no, no. They considered us Riojanos. In the Vascongadas there exists much racism towards those from other areas, though they treated those from Rioja better . . . people from Rioja, Aragon, Navarra were treated better, not like those from Andalusia and Extremadura. This was more before than now.

Ramon: In any case, they did not consider us Basques.

Cati: No, no, no. They called people from other parts maketos or manchurianos.

Barbara: If you are in another province of Spain, and someone asks you where you are from, how would you answer?

Ramon: I would say "Basque" with great pride. And if I was from Cathares or Andalusia, I would say I was Cathareño or Andalus with equal pride.

Cati: I would say I was from San Sebastian. Since we have been living there twenty-two years we consider ourselves of San Sebastian. I am Basque because I am from a Basque province, Alava, but, to be "vasco - vascos," there is a Basque race--that you are descended from your parents, grandparents and ancestors. We are Alaveses and they do not consider us Basques, because I would say, in San Sebastian, well, "I am from Lapuebla," and would ask the customers if I was Basque and they would say no. But, the fault is not all theirs either, but principally ours. Because before, for example, twenty or thirty years ago, when they would ask, "where are you from?," we would answer "from La Rioja." We did not say we were Alaveses, in other words, we did not say we were Basques.

Ramon and Cati's experience as migrants from Rioja Alavesa to San Sebastian highlights the ambiguity of Basque identity for people of Rioja Alavesa. Both said that since the transition to democracy and the establishment of the ikastolas--the bilingual schools--in Rioja Alavesa, they are more aware that Rioja Alavesa is part of the Basque community. Ramon associates his escape from poverty and eventual economic success with his move to San Sebastian and his many Basque customers and friends there. He plays the drum in a men's society in the city which performs annually at the city's fiesta. Both he and Cati said they have many friends and an active social life in San Sebastian and that they would find it boring to return to live full-time in Lapuebla.

Two other couples I knew, who have worked in Vitoria for a number of years, return to Rioja Alavesa most



weekends. Vitoria is only a fifty to sixty minute drive from Rioja Alavesa, compared to the two to three hours from Bilbao or San Sebastian. The greater proximity of Vitoria made it more feasible for migrants to return to their home villages on weekends. The couples mentioned above said the most meaningful part of their lives still focuses on being with family and friends in the villages on the weekends. They had not developed many affective relationships in Vitoria, nor did they identify themselves as Basques. One couple said the northern Basques looked down on them as immigrants. It is difficult to generalize about the experiences of all migrants from Rioja Alavesa to the Basque cities. The majority did express feelings of difference from native Basques of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa and said they were not usually considered Basques by those natives.

Another form of contact between Vizcayans, Guipúzcoans and Rioja Alaveses resulted when migrants to the northern provinces resettled in their home villages, bringing spouses who were natives of Vizcaya or Guipúzcoa. One friend, a woman in her fifties, was the daughter of such a union and said that her mother, a native of Guipúzcoa, although bilingual, never taught the children Euskera. My friend grew up identifying herself as a Riojana. She grew up during the Franco years, not a conducive political climate for perpetuating the Basque language. Her mother, isolated from other Basque speakers, probably had little incentive to

speak the language to her children and chose not to accentuate her difference from neighbors in the Alaveses village.

Two more recent migrants to Rioja Alaveses, also women married to natives of Rioja Alaveses, are having a different experience. Both are native Euskera speakers, one from a town in northern Navarra, and one who grew up on a caserío in Guipúzcoa. They have married Lapueblan men, and their children now study Euskera in the village school. These women speak in Euskera with their children and they are pleased that their children are studying the language. The incorporation of Alava as part of the autonomous Basque community and the regional government's language planning policies encourage these women to perpetuate the Basque language and identity with their children. These children will most likely consider themselves "Basques," unlike my older friend whose Guipúzcoan mother never spoke to her in Euskera.

The views of such incoming migrants from the northern provinces of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa to Rioja Alaveses were also indicative of the perceptions each group has of the other as a different people. A young mother from Guipúzcoa expressed her feeling of being in a foreign land, and described her life on the caserío as different from the way of life in Lapuebla. In her words:

Between Guipúzcoa and Alava, and even within Alava itself, there are many differences. The people, the

form of speaking, the way of thinking. In this zone there is no industry and Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya are more industrial. And so, the work is different. Here, the families only think of their harvest, and if there will be good wine, and that's it. It is economically good here for the families. I come from a family of ten brothers and sisters, and, with my parents and grandparents, there were fourteen of us living on the caserio. Our family life was wonderful. But, I haven't seen that here. Here, it's the custom of all of the men, and many of the women too, to go to the bars every day. So they do not have such a close family life and don't spend as much time with their children, especially the men.

Here they are all Basques. But, in Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya, being Basque implies much more than it does here. Above all the language. Here they don't speak the Basque language. I always speak Euskera to my children because it is my language. They will learn Castilian too. And I hope they learn French and English. The more they know, the better. But for me, it would be very difficult to speak in Castilian to my children. My husband does not speak Euskera. So, it is a problem because I speak to the children in Euskera.

Here, I don't think the people know who they are or who they want to be. I think they have the sentiment of wanting what is best for themselves, but . . . until now, they have been Riojanos, I understand. They are close to Logroño and do their shopping there. I don't observe Basque sentiments here. Down to the landscape, it is different here. There everything is green and here there isn't even a tree, only vineyards and olives.

Alfredo, a long-time resident of Laguardia, is a Guipúzcoan entrepreneur who moved to the village in 1969 to open a business. He also grew up on a caserio and contrasted the lifestyle with that in Rioja Alavesa. He said the caseríos were small, and, not divided between all the siblings like the land in Rioja Alavesa, so, only one son could stay on the farm. The rest had to make their way in the world in some other way. He believed the impartible inheri-

tance system of the caserios promoted a more enterprising spirit in northern Basques. He depicted people from Rioja Alavesa as making enough of a living from the land to enable them to meet in their bodegas to eat and to drink wine every day. Therefore, he surmised, the motivations to go out and start in industry were lacking in Rioja Alavesa. I found the perception of inhabitants of Rioja and Rioja Alavesa as happy drinkers of wine to be a common stereotype held by people in other parts of Spain. People I met on trips to Barcelona, Madrid and Galicia usually commented on the wine and the assumed relaxed lifestyle of the grape growers when I told them I lived in Rioja Alavesa.

Alfredo said he strongly identified himself as a Basque, and more so as the years go by. He said he identified with the Basques' longstanding spirit of democracy and equality: "every man is equal--we all have two eyes, two legs, two arms, men like women, women like men." Regarding Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa, he said it was repressed during Franco's time. Also, he explained that since people did most of their business and shopping in Logroño and had more interchange with Riojan villages, and since they were separated from the rest of the Basque Country by mountains, they felt more like Riojanos. Now, since democracy, the Basque government has been able to incorporate the area into a greater Basque sentiment. "They came down and said, you, too, are Basques, and should be proud of it," he commented.

He added that, because Rioja Alavesa is a frontier area with another region, he thought people in Rioja Alavesa were even more radical and adamant about Basque identity than further into the Basque Country, especially the younger generation. He likes the variety of political sentiment in the area, from the left to the right, and the fact that, since democracy, people are able to voice different political opinions and still live in harmony.

Alfredo focused his perceptions of Basque identity on two markers: a Basque entrepreneurial spirit resulting from the system of impartible inheritance, and the association of Basqueness with democracy and egalitarianism. He also implied that some Rioja Alaveses were becoming Basques through an adoption of Basque patriotism. And, as many natives themselves often explain, he said it was because of Franco's policies of oppressing Basques that Rioja Alaveses were unable to be Basques or express Basqueness during the forty year dictatorship. Although he stereotyped Riojanos as happy drinkers of wine in contrast to Basque business acumen, he did not disqualify inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa from becoming Basques through political loyalty.

This man represents another type of Basque incomer to the Rioja, the wealthy investor. For example, Basque investors in the wineries since the last century affected the economy of the area, but, it is difficult to gauge their impact on perceptions of regional and ethnic identity. They

were interested in cultivating an image of "Riojan" wine and of increasing its' marketability and profitability. The fame the wine has gained throughout Spain has contributed to the stereotype of Riojanos and Rioja Alaveses as contented makers and drinkers of wine.

Another group of northern Basques have come to Rioja Alavesa and Castilian Rioja in large numbers--summer tourists and summer residents from the northern industrial cities. This summer migration is also an outcome of the prosperity of the northern cities. The Basques who visit the Rioja are those who can afford vacations, and many have built or bought summer homes, "chalets" as they are called, in the Riojan villages. The summer climate in the Riojas is dry and sunny, in contrast to the humid and often rainy weather of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. The picturesque villages surrounded by vineyards offer a peaceful respite from city life. Rioja is sometimes called "los pulmones de Bilbao," (the lungs of Bilbao), because the area offers clean, dry air in contrast to the city's pollution.

In two of the larger villages of Rioja Alavesa, Labastida and Laguardia, the population nearly doubles in the summer months with this influx of summer residents from the north. In Labastida, an entire new barrio (neighborhood) of holiday apartments and chalets has grown up beyond the boundary of the original village. In many instances, vineyard land was sold to northern Basques for the construc-

tion of summer homes. They have also bought old buildings in the villages and remodeled them. Many rent apartments and houses from locals and for this reason it was difficult for me to find a reasonably priced rental apartment. I finally found a landlady in Lapuebla who gave me reduced "winter rates" with the understanding that I would vacate for a month in the summer when regular visitors from Bilbao would rent at three times the rate I paid.

The northern Basques are viewed by locals as a wealthier population who can afford vacation homes. There was some resentment expressed towards them, especially towards those who spoke Euskera in the village shops and bars, which locals could not understand. One Lapueblan couple commented:

wife: The polite person will speak the language that we all understand. For example, the Basques who visit here and speak only Basque, I don't like that.

husband: But only a few do that.

wife: But there are a few who don't care. They begin to speak with other Basques and they don't take account that there's another person there. If you don't know Basque, you think, "they are talking about me."

On the other hand, some locals make friends with northern Basque families who visit their village each year. The Rioja Alaveses families occasionally visit these friends in their homes in the north. But, whether relations were strained or friendly, the northerners were usually referred to as "los vasco-vascos," perceived as a different people by the locals.



Part of this summer influx includes migrants from Rioja Alavesa who have done well in the cities. Many spend their month vacation with relatives who live in the village, or in a family home they have remodeled. Most also return for holidays, and to help at the grape harvest. As noted, some, especially those who work in Vitoria, come back to the village almost every weekend. They maintain close ties with family and friends in the villages, who sometimes visit them in the cities, thus providing another avenue of contact with the north.

A middle-aged professional man of Laguardia made the following observations regarding a Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa, using locals' perceptions of the summer tourists as an example:

In Rioja Alavesa, there hasn't existed, until very few years ago, connotations or symbols of Basque culture. We are distinct from the Basque speaking areas, in the landscape, in the customs, in the mentality, in everything. And still, it's like this, there doesn't exist at the popular level, there doesn't exist the conscience of being part of the Basque Country. There exists the awareness of belonging to the province of Alava. We are Alaveses. When the summer comes, still the people of Laguardia continue to say, "the Basques have arrived."

Juridically, we belong to the Basque Country, but that's another matter. Economically we belong to the Basque Country, and form an integral part of the region. But, in Alava, Euskera is not spoken, nor has it been spoken for many centuries, except in the zone of Arramayona (a northern zone of Alava bordering Guipúzcoa). And in Rioja Alavesa, much less. Now, since the death of Franco and the inauguration of liberty, and with the formation of the autonomous communities, we have begun to know the values and the culture of the Basques and are seeing the introduction, rather than the restoration of Euskera here.



This man associates a Basque identity with cultural attributes, especially the language, and says the lack of a "Basque conscience" in the area is evidenced by Rioja Alaveses' perceptions of summer visitors as "the Basques," a people distinct from themselves.

The ethnic ideology of Basqueness which defines Basque identity based on traits associated with the northern provinces is reinforced to Rioja Alaveses in most of their contacts with the northern Basques. The entrenched folk perceptions that true Basques are from the northern provinces work against Rioja Alaveses identifying themselves as Basques. But language policies of the Basque government begin to extend Euskera, one of the main markers of Basqueness in contemporary Basque ideology, to areas such as Rioja Alaveses.

These policies have required another category of northern Basques to come to Rioja Alaveses--the teachers of Euskera in local schools. For example, the three young women who teach at the Lapuebla ikastola return to their homes in the north each weekend. They do not take part in the community life of Lapuebla and they see their time in the village as temporary. As one of them said, "my life is there, in my own community." She explained her view of the teachers' role in Lapuebla:

They have brought us here for the language. We are teaching things from there to people here. They say we are colonizing them, with the language. But I think it is an awakening.

In addition to the teachers of Euskera, other instructors visit the ikastola to teach the children folk dances and songs of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. All of these teachers serve to emphasize to people in Rioja Alavesa that the linguistic and cultural identity markers associated with Basque identity are those of the northern provinces. Their presence may serve to reinforce Rioja Alaveses' sense of distinction from northern Basques while at the same time decreasing the sense of distinction in the children through the education programs.

Finally, during several fiesta days in Lapuebla, demonstrations by folk dance groups and athletes from the northern provinces present to locals customs different from their own, identified as "Basque." Lifting heavy stones ("levantamiento de pesos") and tug of war ("soka-tira") are viewed as "sports of the rural Basques" one young man from Lapuebla explained, and have been demonstrated during Lapueblan fiestas since Alava became part of the Basque autonomous community. Younger people sometimes participate in the tug of war, but locals are mostly observers of these demonstrations. The soka-tira is commonly practiced during pueblo fiestas in Guipúzcoa. Cuadrillas of young men representing the barrios of a village compete.

Altogether, the contacts Rioja Alaveses have had with natives of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa--when they went to the northern cities to work, or when Vizcayans and Guipúzcoans

married into their villages, or when summer visitors from the north vacation in Rioja Alavesa, or when Euskera-speaking teachers work in the local school, or when athletes and folk dancers from the north perform in the villages, have usually served to emphasize the perceptions of Rioja Alaveses as being a different people from "los Vasco-Vascos."

In questioning people in Rioja Alavesa, mostly in the village of Lapuebla, about Basque identity, and from unsolicited remarks and conversations during participant observation, several themes emerged which reflect varying emphasis on different "markers" of Basque identity. During the informal family interviews, answers to the question "Of whom do you normally say, he or she is Basque?" were revealing. All respondents began with "they are" rather than "we are." A summary of answers to this question from twenty-four respondents indicates that Rioja Alaveses generally consider themselves distinct from Basques, or feel that they have a different degree or kind of Basqueness (see Table 1). Some of the twenty-four respondents gave more than one answer.

A majority of respondents associated Basqueness with Euskera and with the northern Basque provinces. Since most Euskera speakers are natives of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, these traits are not unrelated. Although physical characteristics were mentioned by four respondents, only one commented on

racial purity as a distinguishing feature. The decline in the importance of radial and ancestral markers as definitive of Basqueness, as discussed by Urla (1987) and Linz (1980), is necessary for expansion of the Basque ethnic nation.

In another series of questions I asked during the informal family interviews, I attempted to gauge perceptions of "structural distance," defined by Evans-Pritchard as "the distance between groups of persons in social structure" (1976:113). He used the concept to explain different levels of Nuer expression of "we" - "them" boundaries and concluded that the Nuer, the English, and all social groups categorize themselves into increasingly inclusive structural levels the further they are from their home communities (Evans-Pritchard 1976:113-138). Following this model, I asked informants how they would respond to the question, "Where are you from?" if asked in three increasingly distant locations: the city of Logroño, another region of Spain, another country. Respondents said they would reply with the name of their village if asked the question in Logroño. If they were outside of Spain, most said they would answer that they were from Spain, although a few said they would answer the Basque Country. Answers in this international context reveal some change and lack of uniformity in Rioja Alaveses' perceptions of belonging at a national level. But the context which elicited the most disagreement was the regional level.

TABLE 1.

Responses to the Question:  
Of Whom Do You Normally Say,  
"He or She is Basque?"

| Informant Response Categories               | Explanation of Categories   | Number who gave response |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| <u>Geographic Location</u>                  | A Basque is someone from Vizcaya or Guipúzcoa, or from a caserío, or, Alaveses are less Basque than Vizcayans & Guipúzcoans | 8                        |
| <u>Language</u>                             | A Basque is someone who speaks Euskera  | 8                        |
| <u>Physical Traits</u>                      | A Basque is someone who looks different--especially--Basques are taller and stronger  | 4                        |
| <u>"manera de ser"</u><br>(manner of being) | A Basque has a distinct character, a distinct way of thinking, a distinct way of being                                      | 4                        |
| <u>Work Ethic</u>                           | Basques are entrepreneurial, hard workers, wealthy  | 3                        |
| <u>Accent</u>                               | Basques speak Castilian with a different accent than Rioja Alaveses   | 2                        |
| <u>Terrorism</u>                            | One response: "A Basque is a terrorist"; one response: "Others see Basques as terrorists"                                   | 2                        |
| <u>Racial Purity</u>                        | The Basques are the least mixed race in Spain   | 1                        |
| <u>Political Identity</u>                   | A Basque is someone who belongs to a Basque political party   | 1                        |

In responding to the question "where are you from?" when in other regions of Spain, most adults aged approximately thirty to eighty said they would answer Rioja, Rioja Alavesa, or Alava. Many younger respondents said they would say they were from the Basque Country. Perceptions of belonging at the regional level are the most ambiguous in Rioja Alavesa today. The younger generation, including many who are learning Euskera and Basque history in school, are more likely to identify with the autonomous community of the Basque Country than with the province (Alava) or geographic region (Rioja, Rioja Alavesa). In commenting on this question, some informants revealed another possible reason for reluctance to identify themselves as Basque when in other regions of Spain.

A number of people said that Basques were stereotyped as violent terrorists by other Spaniards. They said they hesitated to identify themselves as Basques, or say they were from the Basque Country when in other regions of Spain for fear of being labelled a terrorist. One sixty-two year old man from Lapuebla said: "They think if we're from Alava, we're in ETA, that we carry pistols all the time." One fourteen year old reported that on a school trip to Mallorca, if they said they were from the Basque Country, they would be looked at in a funny way, as if they were all "etarras" (members of ETA). Others reported that the police are also more suspicious if they think you are Basque. Two

teenagers said that on a recent school trip, the students went in two busses. The bus with a Bilbao license plate was stopped and searched by police, while the one with a Logroño license went through. Concern about being labelled a terrorist could be one reason for a reluctance to claim Basque identity when in other parts of Spain.

Although the majority of people I knew in Rioja Alavesa believed they had more in common with Riojanos across the Ebro than with Basques from Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, and reported generally friendly relations with Riojanos, I was also told by a few people that they had begun to feel some discrimination in Logroño. Several women told me they were not treated in a friendly manner when they visited the hospital or clinics in Logroño recently. Two reported even being told to use facilities in Vitoria instead. Under Spain's national health system, the provinces administer medical services, and the Alavese provincial government pays Rioja a set amount to handle people who live closer to Logroño than to Vitoria. When one woman complained about impolite treatment at the Logroño clinic, her husband said, "In Logroño they treat me well in the shops." The wife replied, "Yes, because you are going to leave your money."

In some instances, then, Rioja Alaveses are being identified as Basques by their neighbors across the Ebro, which is highlighting their ambiguous border status. Not sharing in many of the markers which have been used in

defining a Basque identity, and generally feeling less Basque than the Vasco-Vascos from Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, they are nonetheless being identified as Basques in dealings with some Riojan bureaucrats and medical personnel.

The ideologies of regional identity promoted by authorities of both the Basque and Riojan autonomous governments are also aimed at differentiating Rioja Alavesa from the autonomous community of Rioja. As discussed earlier, historical interpretation and symbolization of the wine culture are being used in fostering distinct identities in the respective communities. Linguistic and economic policies of the Basque government and some discrimination towards Rioja Alaveses' from service providers in Logroño, may also foster Rioja Alaveses' identification as Basque. On the other hand, their interactions with Basques from Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa tend to reinforce their sense of distinction from those northern Basques.

In this chapter, I have examined ethnic ideologies and folk perceptions of regional and ethnic identities. But my aim is to understand "change-in-the-making" (Moore 1987) at the local level. The next three chapters are therefore focused on those contexts of peoples' daily lives--wine, work and identity; pueblo identity; and linguistic identity--in which change was detectable. As Cohen comments, "local experience mediates national identity and, therefore, an



anthropological understanding of the latter cannot proceed without knowledge of the former" (1982:13).

The dissertation thus far has described the broad historical forces and precedents which influenced the evolution of Basque identity, Rioja Alavesa's general isolation from these processes, and how ethnic ideology is being adapted as the ethnic nation expands. The following chapters illustrate that this is not a one-way process of outside forces acting upon passive communities and individuals--in their everyday lives, people of Rioja Alavesa participate in and influence patterns of change.

## CHAPTER 6

### WINE, WORK AND IDENTITY IN RIOJA ALAVESA

The geographic, historic, political and economic conditions which have shaped the wine industry of the Riojas were discussed in Chapter Four. As described, the modern wine industry began in the middle of the last century, largely developed by French and Basque entrepreneurs, and, more recently, by multi-national corporations. These investors established modern, industrial wineries, but for the most part, did not invest in vineyards. The risky business of growing the grapes is mostly left to the local growers, whose holdings average only five to six hectares. Such small growers have little control over the commercialization and marketing of the wine, and usually sell their grapes or wine in bulk to the large wineries. They are thus dependent on the prices offered by the wineries.

Through the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries, the small grape growers and landless vine workers who worked as day laborers in others' vineyards led hard lives. When the vineyards were devastated by the phylloxera epidemic of the early 1900s and destroyed and neglected during and after the Spanish Civil War, many left the Riojas

to work in the northern Basque cities. In spite of this history of deprivation and exploitation, the growing of grapes, the making of wine, and the wine's centrality in the social life of the Riojan communities result in peoples' identification with this lifeway and product, whether or not they make their livelihoods from the wine industry.

In the last chapter, I discussed how the symbols of the traditional wine culture are used by commercial wineries in advertising and marketing, as well as by the Basque and Riojan autonomous governments in representing regional identities. The political division has also meant different levels of economic aid to growers on either side of the Ebro, as discussed in Chapter Four. These ideological and economic influences affect local level identity with the wine culture, but do not determine it. This identity also springs from intimate relations with the land and work of the vineyards.

The folk knowledge and customs associated with growing grapes and making wine, environmental perceptions, and the social relations of vineyard-related production, contribute to locals' identification with a wine culture throughout the district. In this chapter, I will discuss the significance of the environment and wine culture in the lives of the people with whom I lived and worked for a year, explore the relationship of work, wine and pueblo identity, and discuss Basque influence on this local identity context.

Environment and Identity in Rioja Alavesa

As in most of Europe, human interaction with the environment over many centuries has permanently altered the landscape of the Riojas. The small, neat vineyards and cereal crops, interrupted by bare hills and the village sites, are characteristic of both sides of the Ebro. It is a cozy, bucolic scenery. Inhabitants' awareness of their environment serves as a basis for a sense of self in place. Their relationship with the landscape is an intimate one, with each vineyard and hillock named.

Since the landholding pattern throughout the Riojan wine district is one of dispersed small holdings, few families own any sizeable area of contiguous fields or vineyards. As explained in Chapter Four, a family's land was usually acquired gradually, a vineyard bought here and there over the years. The average size of a vineyard is less than one hectare, and many are smaller than .25 hectares (Parrish 1984:258). Each individual vineyard is distinguished from adjacent vineyards by the angle at which the renques (rows) of cepas (individual vine plants) are planted in the vineyard. All the rows in a single vineyard are planted at an angle distinct from the adjacent vineyard.

The vineyards are also distinguished by names. Some of these names are based on an event or legend associated with the vineyard, some are based on a nearby topographic feature, some are just arbitrarily named. The vineyard

names provide mental maps for the grape growers. A man can tell his wife that he will be working in "Monte Bueno" (Good Mountain) or "El Puerto" (The Port), and she and the children will know where to find him if they are going to help him later in the day, or for other purposes. Each vineyard has a history as to when it was bought, when it was planted and re-planted, what type of grapes were planted, its particular soil and water conditions, and its usual production rate.

While I was helping one friend harvest grapes, he explained we were working in his favorite vineyard that day, named "El Muerto de la Choza" (The Dead Man of the Hut) or "El Muerto" for short. It is located at a higher level in the undulating landscape and provides good vistas all around. My friend's grandfather purchased it one hundred years ago and built the stone borders and drainage ditches which enclose the vineyard. His father built the stone, cone shaped hut ("choza") where refuge is taken from rain and cold and some equipment stored. From the choza, the man pointed to the view of a village below and said "es la viña mas bonita" ("it is the prettiest vineyard"). Now he and his son work it. Legend has it that a man died at the spot sometime before his grandfather bought the vineyard, hence, its name "El Muerto." El Muerto usually provides a good harvest, but the vineyard is also part of family history and

identity, with significance beyond the economic for my friend and his family.

I was reminded of this personalization of the landscape throughout my stay in the Riojas. One of my first activities in the village of Lapuebla was to accompany a cuadrilla (friendship group) of women, aged 35 to 65, on their afternoon walks into the countryside. We ambled along the tracks and roads that crisscross the vineyards and the women knew who each vineyard belonged to, and would comment on its condition--criticizing anyone as lazy who had not meticulously weeded between the vines. They pointed out the first budding leaves on the cepas in late April, and worried that a late frost might kill the new growth. They taught me how to distinguish white grapevines from red grapevines by the slightly variant green of the leaves. These women had helped their parents and husbands in the vineyards, and learned the landscape from childhood. Some still help their spouses, but, with the introduction of tractors and other labor-saving devices in the last fifteen to twenty years, many only assist at the grape harvest nowadays. These women maintain an intimate knowledge of the village lands, of the conditions of the vineyards, and of the effects of seasonal and weather changes.

Weather was a prevalent topic of conversation among villagers as the grape growers' livelihood depended on the successful maturation of the grapes to the October grape

harvest. A late spring or early autumn tormenta (storm) might damage the new growth or the maturing grapes with high winds, or, devastate an entire area with piedra (hail). Piedra tends to fall sporadically and did destroy some grapes in the autumn of 1987. Late spring or early autumn frosts can also be destructive. By the late summer of 1987, the people of Lapuebla were worried because it had been a particularly dry year, without the requisite amount of winter and spring rains to ensure a successful harvest. I listened to conversations and comments about this in the streets, homes and bars. It finally rained in late August and September, and the October harvest was a good one.

In response to the question, "what do you think is the major problem Rioja Alavesa faces?", many people responded la sequía (drought) when asked the question during the family interview sessions. They explained that the weather seems to be getting dryer in recent years. Many saw a need for different irrigation regulations to be instituted by the Wine Control Board, and for government aid to construct irrigation facilities.

The shared environment and lifeways of the wine district of the Riojas are used by people to distinguish themselves from inhabitants of different geographic zones. For example, people of grape-growing villages of the autonomous community of Rioja told me they had more in common with their neighbors in Rioja Alavesa than they did

with the people of the nearby Cameros mountains, who are associated with a pastoral lifeway. The Cameros zone is within the political boundary of the autonomous community of Rioja and Rioja Alavesa is part of the Basque Country.

Likewise, many informants in Rioja Alavesa distinguished themselves from Basques based on their perceptions of Basques as people from the humid, mountainous, and coastal environment of the northern provinces. The environment and lifeway associated with the Riojan wine district are bases for a regional identity associated with the geographic region of Rioja. Spanish anthropologists Lisón Tolosana (1977), Caro Baroja (1986) and Elías Pastor (1981) posit that shared environments and lifeways determine cultural identity in Spain more than arbitrary political divisions. Elías Pastor, a Riojan anthropologist, is critical of attempts to define a "Riojan identity" congruent with the political boundaries of the newly autonomous community of Rioja which exclude the adjacent wine producing districts of Alava and Navarra (1981). But Rioja Alaveses' perceptions of regional and national identity are in flux--many continue to identify themselves as Spaniards from the Rioja region, famous for its wines, while others are adopting a Basque ethnic and/or national identity. These ethnic and national identities do not replace peoples' identity with their natal pueblo.



In Rioja Alavesa, the most potent means of distinguishing "us" from "them" in daily interactions within Rioja Alavesa and with neighboring Rioja, is pueblo identity. When I asked people how they would answer the question "where are you from?" when shopping in Logroño, no one hesitated to say they would answer with the name of their pueblo. People in the autonomous community of Rioja are familiar with each pueblo name in Rioja Alavesa, and vice versa. Important markers of pueblo distinction are local perceptions of pueblo wine and work ethics. Other expressions and manifestations of pueblo identity will be discussed in the following chapter.

As an example of the interrelationship of pueblo identity and identity with wine, climatic variations are thought to produce variant qualities of wine and grapes in different pueblos. Minor variations in temperature, precipitation and soil type are cited by people in distinguishing their pueblo from neighboring pueblos. People in Lapuebla told me their climate was warmer and drier than that of Laguardia, located six kilometers to the north at the foot of the Cantabrian mountains (see Figure 3). Although there are no recorded weather statistics for individual pueblos, Palacios (1978:16) has noted that, due to differences in altitude and wind exposure, temperatures and precipitation do vary within Rioja Alavesa. These fluctuations resulted in a slightly different agricultural

cycle between Lapuebla and Laguardia--the grapes of Laguardia ripened two to three weeks after the grapes of Lapuebla due to the cooler, damper conditions of Laguardia. Laguardia did have colder temperatures and more frequent frost and snowfall than Lapuebla, and people of Lapuebla felt they lived in a sunnier, warmer, and therefore, more "open" village than Laguardia, whose narrow streets saw little sunlight on some winter days.

People from both villages claimed the wine produced in these two villages, and others as well, varied due to climate and soil differences. Lapueblans said their drier, sunnier climate produced fewer grapes of higher quality than the grapes produced in the nearby villages of Laguardia and Elciego. A young farmer and his wife from Lapuebla tried to explain why they think Lapuebla produces a superior wine:

husband: The wine of Lapuebla is the best in Spain, since olden times. It has won a lot of medals in Madrid and other places. The wines of Elciego and Laguardia are good, but not like this one. It's a finer wine. The wine of Lapuebla is a choice wine. The wine most similar to this is from Baños del Ebro (another village in Rioja Alavesa).

wife: Lapuebla is the cradle of wine. The grape is very good to eat but very soft to transport. The skin of the grape is very sensitive.

husband: For this reason the wine comes out very fine --because the grape has little skin.

wife: In other pueblos, the skin is thicker. When eating grapes from other pueblos, the skin stays on. But in Lapuebla, the skin comes off while you are eating it. If it rains a lot, the skin comes off.

husband: In Laguardia and Elciego, the skin is tougher. In Baños del Ebro, the skin is more delicate.

Also, in Elciego and Laguardia, there are more grapes on fewer cepas, due to the different soil and irrigation conditions. Lapuebla is one of the driest zones in Rioja, so the cepas produce fewer grapes, but of higher quality.

Another couple gave similar reasons for the differences in wine between Lapuebla and Laguardia:

husband: The wine from here {Lapuebla} is very choice. It is a question of the soil.

wife: The grape of Laguardia has very tough skin--those here have very soft skin--not very resistant.

husband: It's the soil. This grape matures well.

Distinct qualities of the grapes and wine are associated with the micro-environments of specific pueblos according to local folk wisdom.

It should be kept in mind that most wine made by the local growers in all of these villages is sold in bulk to the industrial wineries where it is blended with wines from all of the sub-zones of the Riojas. Families who do make wine usually keep enough for their own home use, and, as discussed in Chapter Four, some individuals and local cooperatives bottle and commercialize their wine. When visiting friends and relatives in neighboring villages, people have the opportunity to taste the locally-produced wines and arrive at the kinds of comparisons noted above. One elderly gentleman assured me he could distinguish which village a wine was from by its taste. So, in spite of the fact that the majority of grapes and wine are sold to the

industrial wineries, people tended to describe the wine in association with particular villages and locales.

The grape-growing, wine-making lifeway, and the wine itself, are important identity markers for people both at regional and pueblo levels. This identity is influenced by idealization of the wine culture in marketing, tourist promotion, and the developing ideologies of the autonomous communities. Also, the mechanization of agriculture and increased employment in industry and the service sector affect relationships with the environment and vineyard work in the Riojas. For example, young women of Lapuebla now in their teens and twenties have rarely helped in the vineyards except at the grape harvest, and many work in a local clothing factory or go on to higher education. It is not likely they will acquire the same intimate knowledge of the landscape as their mothers with whom I walked through the vineyards. But the symbolic importance of the wine culture is likely to continue. Although tractors have reduced the need for animal and man power and fewer hands are required in the vineyard work than fifteen to twenty years ago, much of the work is still necessarily manual. Up to the actual making of the wine, there is a seasonal round of vineyard work practiced throughout the Riojan wine district through the autumn grape harvest, la vendimia.

Seasonal Round of the Riojan Grape Grower

Following the October grape harvest, the yearly cycle begins anew with the time-consuming, labor-intensive pruning of the vines which is done between November and May. The first stage of the pruning, or la poda, is carried out intermittently between November and March. This delicate operation is accomplished with hand shears while the vines are dormant, and involves cutting all but the three best sarmientos, or shoots, from the vine, leaving two yemas (buds) on each of the shoots. Only two growers I knew had invested in expensive automated shears, which they said made the work easier.

Other winter activities include clearing rocks from the vineyards, uprooting old vineyards, and planting new ones. The heavy work of rock clearing and uprooting is made much easier by the use of large tractors with special attachments, usually rented on an hourly basis by the grower. My neighbor, Julia, explained that it cost them 10,000 pesetas an hour (approximately \$83 at the 1987 exchange rate of 120 pesetas per \$1.00) to hire the big tractor and operator now needed to uproot old vines. In the past, mules were used and the job was much more time and labor intensive. Julia said they also spent 70,000 pesetas for the poison used to kill the roots of the old vines. Their total cost for uprooting and clearing the vineyard was approximately 200,000 pesetas. "Money always going out,

without assurance that it will be coming back in," Julia commented. In planting the new vineyards, the delicate skill of grafting the European stock onto the phylloxera resistant American root stock is mostly done by hand. An automated splicing machine is used by some growers to splice the shoots for grafting, but the rest of the operation is manual.

In the Spring, each vine is again attended to in the next phases of pruning known as espreguar and desnietar. These processes rid the vine of unnecessary tendrils and leaves which would weaken the plant and obstruct sunlight. Espreguar involves the breaking off, by hand, of new buds which sprout on the trunk or main limbs of the vine, as new growth is kept restricted to the sarmientos, or shoots. Desnietar (literally translated: "to do away with the grandchildren") involves the plucking of excess tendrils from the budding sarmientos. Some women occasionally help with this manual work, although more did so in the past. González Larraina (1984) estimates that of forty working days required to care for one hectare of vineyard, twenty of them are taken up with the three stages of pruning.

During the summer, sulphur, fertilizers and herbicides are applied, by tractor when possible. In older vineyards where the renques are planted too close together for tractor access, or in hilly vineyards inaccessible to tractors, a hand sprayer is used. Growers said this work has increased

in recent years due to the greater use of chemicals. Previously, many grape growers sought temporary work during the summer until the Fall grape harvest. The vendimia takes place mostly in October, with exact dates varying between villages due to the different maturation times of the grapes.

Some growers hire migrant workers from Portugal or other parts of Spain, gypsies, or students to harvest the grapes, while others depend almost entirely on the labor of family and friends, and on exchange relationships with other growers. Many who migrated to nearby cities return to assist their families with the grape harvest, or at least to help on the weekends. As noted, most migrants work in Vitoria, Bilbao or San Sebastián, and are not more than a three hour drive from Rioja Alavesa. Participating in the grape harvest reinforces identity with the grape and wine culture for the migrants. Where family and friends work the harvest, it is a very social occasion, with much joking and ribald humor, and delicious hot meals and wine shared in the vineyards.

The women prepare the comidas (main daily meal, eaten around 2:00 p.m.) which are usually taken to the vineyards and eaten outside. Some women cook in the mornings and pick grapes only in the afternoons. Others prefer to cook the evening before, or at 4:00 and 5:00 a.m., in order to participate in the harvest all day. I wondered at the pre-

dawn cooking of my neighbor, Julia, and asked her why she did not cook later in the morning and go to the vineyards just in the afternoons. She replied that she did not want to miss anything in the vineyards and enjoyed the comradeship of working with family and friends. She and her husband, Pedro, have exchanged labor at the vendimia with a friend from Laguardia for the last twenty years. Since the grapes of Laguardia ripen two to three weeks later than those of Lapuebla, the families were able to help at each other's vendimias. Pedro and Julia's extended family also helped them. The days I picked with them were festive, social occasions.

Nonetheless, harvesting grapes is dirty, back-breaking work. The vines grow low to the ground, so the picker spends most of the long day bent over, snipping the individual clusters with a corquetta, a small wood handled blade used for the purpose, or with small hand shears. The grapes are dropped into a plastic container and, when brimming full, someone helps a man lift the fifty kilo load onto his shoulder. He carries it to the tractor cart where he dumps the grapes. A twenty-six year old unemployed teacher from Bilbao related his view of working the vendimia as a paid laborer:

Many people where I live, when they speak of it, think it would be good to come and work the vendimia. But if they did, they would find it quite hard. There is harder agricultural work, but since you have to work the vendimia for many days in a row, and long hours, it is very tiring and difficult. You need some willpower



to do it, and it's only possible if you are in good physical condition. You are at work at 7:00 a.m., and it's cold and wet, then you work until almost 7:00 p.m. Then, you're often sleeping in a tent or a barn. It's known that the pickers are poorly paid. There should be better pay, better food and lodgings. Last year was my first year to work the vendimia and I did not think it would be easy. You just have to overcome the difficulties.

In 1987, the average daily salary paid to a picker ranged from 2,500 to 3,000 pesetas a day, with or without food and/or lodging. An average grower, with approximately six hectares of vineyard, requires about a week to ten days to complete the harvest, transporting the grapes from the vineyard to the bodega by tractor cart. Prior to the introduction of tractors fifteen to twenty years ago, the harvest took twice as long since the grapes had to be transported by mule cart or mules carrying baskets.

Although much of the vineyard work still requires manual labor, the introduction of tractors and other machinery has changed the nature of some of the work and some of the social relations of production. For example, there is less exchange labor between neighbors and relatives. People agreed that the work is less physically demanding, but debated whether time was saved by the devices, or whether more work had to be done in order to pay for them. One grower commented: "Before, with one mule, that was enough. And the mule was worth 20-25,000 pesetas. Today, a tractor is worth a million. Today you have more in equipment than you had before in your whole farm."

There was a perception of a different quality of time as well. For example, several people pointed out how now, with cars and tractors, one arrives in the vineyard in minutes instead of the leisurely, sometimes hour-long ride to work in the mule cart. Although nostalgia was expressed for a remembered greater spirit of cooperation and slower pace of life before mechanization, no one said they wanted to return to the "good old days," which they associate with long, hard work for little pay and greater inequality of land distribution. Most informants agreed that the improved standards of living enjoyed today are preferable to the poverty of the past. As one elderly Lapueblan man simply put it, "Before, more people were poor. Today everyone dresses and eats." The yearly round of vineyard work ends for many growers when they sell their grapes to a private or cooperative industrial winery. Unlike most growers in other villages, however, the production cycle continues through the making of the wine for the majority of growers in the village of Lapuebla.

#### Making Wine in Lapuebla de Labarca

For the period of the harvest and the wine making, about the whole month of October, Lapuebla exudes the sights and smells of grapes and wine. Laden with the glistening grapes, the overflowing tractor carts are seen throughout the village. Growers deliver their harvest and deposit the grapes in the family bodega, returning to the vineyard for

another load. There is a heightened level of excitement and activity as everyone rises early to pick the grapes or to make the wine. There is much conversation about the quality and quantity of the harvest and guesses as to what the prices for grapes and wine are likely to be. People keep track of who is starting or finishing their vendimia and of who might need to hire one of the migrant workers passing through the village seeking work. The migrant grape pickers are a source of gossip and diversion for locals. Many women are busied with preparations for returning relatives and visiting friends who might be arriving to help with the vendimia or the wine making.

Once the grapes are harvested, the usually quiet area in the northwestern corner of the village where the bodegas are located is transformed to the hub of the intense activity of wine making. The roads are splattered with grape juice and the pungent smells of the first fermentations waft throughout the village. In some villages the bodegas are located in or near the homes and in others, as in Lapuebla, they are located in a separate barrio outside the village, usually built to take advantage of the slope of a hillside for easier digging of the deep cellars.

The family bodega is made up of various compartments. On the ground floor, near the entrance, is the lago, the place where the grapes are deposited to begin fermentation. These depositories are dug right out of the rock or ashlar.

Near the lago, or lagos, is the wine press in the bodegas which still have them. The oldest types are of wood, the more modern are automated mechanisms of wood and metal. Beneath, in the cellar, are the wooden barrels or cement depositories which hold the wine during the rest of the fermentation process. In some recently modernized bodegas, the depositories are of steel. The cellars maintain a naturally constant temperature of 13 to 15 degrees C. and a high humidity, necessary conditions for the proper fermentation and maintenance of the wine (Elías Pastor 1982a:36-37). These bodegas of stone and wood have an ambience of times past. González Larraina comments, "The growers of Rioja make their red wines with the entire cluster of grapes (e.g. not separating them from the stems first), faithful to the techniques that, except for a few improvements, are no different from those used by their great grandfathers" (1984:82).

When I went to help Pedro and Julia tread their grapes in one of these old bodegas, rising at 5:00 a.m. in the chill morning and finding my way to the bodega by flashlight, I found my friends already hard at work. Julia, Pedro, their teenage son, and their fathers, were treading the grapes, barefoot or in rubber boots. It is not customary for women to participate in the grape pressing, but Julia enjoyed occasionally helping in the bodega. The light of the bare electric bulb reminded me I was still in

the twentieth century. I tended to romanticize about the beauty of the grapes and the making of the wine by these traditional methods in the old family bodegas. When I mentioned my impressions to Pedro as we tread his grapes, he commented, "to us, we have done it all of our lives and it is just routine." Most of the growers who have decided to modernize their bodegas have opted to build newer, larger ones near their homes instead of trying to remodel the rather cramped, older bodegas.

Although most growers view the work as a necessary routine, there was an undeniable social and somewhat festive atmosphere in the barrio of bodegas during the weeks of the wine making. People would stroll through the area to chat and check the progress of the wine making. Those working would shout salutations and invitations to passersby to come in for a drink. The visitor would often stay and help for a while. Two to three days after the grapes are deposited in the lagos and some initial fermentation has begun, the daily treading of the grapes in the lagos begins. The treading is repeated periodically based on the speed of fermentation. A lagoon holds approximately 27,000 kilos of grapes. Pedro and two other men took approximately three hours of treading to press this amount. They waited for the juice to drain out and repeated the process three times over a two day period. Since Pedro had approximately 60,000 kilos of grapes, a little over two lagos of grapes had to be pressed. The

juice is either shunted down to the cellar depository or piped out into a plastic transport barrel for transfer to another bodega.

After pressing the grapes in the lagos, the remaining grape residue from the lago is transferred to a wine press for final pressing. Most growers in Lapuebla now use mechanized presses and have either invested in their own, or rent time on someone else's. There are still five manual, wooden presses used in the village. Pedro continued using the wooden press that had belonged to his grandfather. He said for the two days he needed to press his grapes, it was more economic to hire people to help him on the manual press than to invest in an expensive mechanized one. He hired two cousins, employees of the AGE bodega who got the time off, and had the free help of his father, father-in-law, brother-in-law and son.

Working the manual press requires the men to gradually tighten the large, screw-type apparatus which presses down the heavy planks which are placed on top of the grapes. Six men usually operate the press with three men on each side of the wooden lever, pushing and pulling it back and forth to tighten the screw. This is done for ten minutes, and then the men have to wait for twenty to thirty minutes until the juice from this pressing runs out before tightening the press again. This work pace allows time for talking, joking and story telling while the men wait for the juice to drain

out before operating the press again. Numerous passers-by or family members visited the bodega to chat and sometimes lend a hand at the press when I spent the day watching and helping with this operation. The automatic presses eliminate much of this socializing related to the manual work. After the pressing, the wine ferments in the depositories until at least January, when it is usually sold to the industrial bodegas. Pedro and Julia sold their wine to Savin, a large bodega in Logroño.

However the grapes are pressed, the making of wine in Lapuebla by most village growers gives the pueblo an atmosphere of being a more "traditional" grape-growing, wine-making village. Lapueblans involvement in the wine making increases their own identification as "people of the vine." They perceive themselves as harder workers and better viti-viniculturalists than their neighbors in the villages of Elciego and Laguardia. Lapueblans also say their wine is better because they continue making it themselves in the family wineries. A number of people commented that more chemicals and treatments were used in the industrial wineries and that wine made without all the additives was more natural. There are various explanations as to why Lapueblans continue making wine more than people in the neighboring villages.

The first large commercial winery in the Riojas was established by Marqués de Riscal in 1868 in Elciego. In

1973, Domecq, an Andalusian sherry firm, established a large, ultra-modern winery in the village. Most growers in Elciego sell their grapes to these bodegas. Also, in an unusual move for a large winery, Domecq bought vineyards from locals, and many did sell their land in the early to mid-1970s. By 1976, about one third of the three million kilograms of grapes processed by the Domecq bodega were from the firm's own vineyards (Parrish 1984:227). But Domecq is currently selling some vineyards back to local growers because the firm has found it more profitable to leave the risky business of growing the grapes to the small growers. Domecq, in cooperation with the Seagram company, also purchased an older industrial bodega in Laguardia and totally modernized its operations (Ibid.:228). These large, commercial bodegas in Elciego and Laguardia are ready and accessible customers for locally grown grapes.

Lapuebla lacks such a convenient market for its harvest, but Lapueblans offered varying theories as to why most of them persisted in making wine in comparison to the neighboring villagers. One Lapueblan reflected a common village opinion that the difference was due to the different pattern of land distribution in Lapuebla. He said fewer people made wine in Laguardia and Elciego because these two villages had had more of a "latifundia" system of land ownership. Therefore, many people had worked as day laborers for the large landowners, and now that the land has



been more evenly partitioned, he said, the people of Laguardia and Elciego do not have the habit of making their own wine, so they sell the grapes instead. Since there were not such drastic differences in wealth in Lapuebla, he continued, more people have been in the habit of making wine. The making of wine by Lapueblans contributes to their image of themselves as harder workers, with greater interest in viti-viniculture than their neighbors.

Many Lapueblans also told me how they bought numerous vineyards from Laguardia when the wealthier landlords started selling out, proving they were more interested in, and adept at, working the vineyards than the local Laguardians who were not as aggressive in buying these vineyards. Also, several villagers told me how most Lapueblans refused to sell vineyards to the Domecq bodega, while many in Elciego and Laguardia opted for this "easy money" at a time when the vineyards were not as profitable as they are now. One young Lapueblan grower and his wife told me:

wife: We are harder workers in Lapuebla than in Laguardia, because we are buying their vineyards, and also, in Elciego.

husband: In Elciego, the Domecq company came from Andalusia and bought much land.

wife: Here, they offered us a great deal of money to sell, but in this pueblo, no one sold their land. It's a different mentality. In contrast, those in Elciego sold a lot of land.

husband: And in Laguardia. And after they sold their land, they went to work as day laborers.

wife: Here, we don't like to work for another person--no, no, no. We like very much for each person to have their own lands and to work them.

husband: You're not under anybody. I prefer to earn less in the campo (fields) than I could working for somebody else. Even though I had a good job in AGE (large bodega in Fuenmayor)--I was in charge of quality control--the land called to me. In the factory, you are like a work animal, a mule.

A man from Laguardia voiced a varying viewpoint as to why Laguardians sold their vineyards to Domecq and why growers from other villages bought them when Domecq began selling the vineyards:

Today, the people of Laguardia work hard, are well organized, and economically, are moving along. What has occurred is that there are people (in Laguardia), it is true, who have not had the number of hectares of vineyards that maybe others have on an average in other pueblos. And, in these circumstances, the economy of Laguardia is a little poor because of these depressions. And, recently, we saw the phenomenon of Domecq which came to Rioja and started buying land. They paid well, and those who only had a little land sold it and left. The wine was not very profitable, and the grape had little value, the work was hard, and these bits of land the people had were not profitable. Those who sold their land sold it because they did not have another way out. But later, Domecq began to sell the land they had bought because it had not had the result they wanted. And this is when people in the pueblos around here began to buy the land back. Because the people in the pueblos around Laguardia were better situated, they had bought their machinery, and their fincas (farms) were bigger (i.e. they were more prosperous than most Laguardians). And in Lapuebla, certainly, they had a better economy and technology--the campo and the factories--something that Laguardia has not had.

It is true that the young Lapueblan couple cited above have been able to accumulate their vineyards gradually, with the help of wages earned in local industries. The husband explained that they did not inherit enough vineyards from

their parents to make a living and that he had worked for five years in the Zanussi company (located in the autonomous community of Rioja), one year for the Riojan gas company, and one in the AGE bodega. He also used to work temporary construction jobs during the summers after he quit his job at AGE. His wife had worked in the village clothing factory from the age of fourteen until twenty-one, one year after they married. They saved their wages and bought vineyards. The husband said with pride, "we began by buying five very small vineyards, and little by little, we bought more, and now, well, think of it, what we have done."

He now works full time in the vineyards and the family has taken out low interest loans offered through the government of the autonomous Basque community to build a modern bodega, with plans to eventually get their own label and bottle and market their own wine. Several other village families said they also planned to try to market their own wine. The fact that most growers in Lapuebla make their wine, even if they sell it in bulk to the industrial bodegas, extends their involvement with the wine complex beyond the grape harvest, and contributes to their image of themselves as hard workers, dedicated to their land and to producing quality wine.

When I mentioned to one Lapueblan grower that Lapueblans seemed to like to follow the traditions of the past by making wine in the family bodegas, he said it was

rather a matter of practicality and economics. Since there was not a large bodega in Lapuebla to buy the grapes, Lapueblans would have to transport them to Laguardia to sell them. In addition to the expense of the transport, the problem was compounded because the weighing equipment at the large bodegas was not yet opened at the time of the Lapuebla grape harvest. Because of the soil and climate differences between pueblos, the grapes of Lapuebla are ready to harvest a week to ten days sooner than the grapes of Laguardia, Elciego, or Fuenmayor, and the bodegas in those villages do not start buying grapes until later in the season. So, Laguardians sell their grapes because there is a bodega in the village to buy them at the time of the harvest and Lapueblans continue to make wine because there is no ready, accessible buyer at the time of their harvest.

This grower also explained that the architecture of the village of Laguardia makes it difficult or impossible for tractors to enter the village's narrow, medieval streets and deposit the grapes into the family bodegas which are located beneath the houses inside of the village walls. In 1981 in Laguardia, a cooperative of twenty-six growers formed, and with loans from the Basque government, built their own wineries outside the village walls. Each member has his individual bodega within the building, and members share a large, state-of-the-art wine press. This indicates that some growers in Laguardia produce their own wine, but does

not diminish Lapueblans' stereotype of their neighbors as lazier and less independent.

### Work and Identity in Lapuebla

In recent years, the good price for grapes and wine, the financial assistance available through the Basque government to improve land, purchase equipment and establish bodegas; and the positive and somewhat idealized images of the wine growers' lifeway promoted by both Riojan and Basque autonomous governments, have all encouraged Lapueblans' efforts to improve and expand their holdings. However, their success in the vineyards is also partly based on Lapueblans' hard work in local industry.

In 1984, 51.8% of Lapueblans employed worked in local industries while only 39% worked full time in agriculture (Lapuebla de Labarca 1984). Such figures can be misleading since many families in the village have members working in each sector. Also, the census does not record that many men who have full-time jobs are also part-time agriculturalists. Such part-time agriculturalists are a growing phenomenon throughout Spain and the Riojas, and are nicknamed mixtos (mixed). In addition, some women in Lapuebla work outside the home full-time. A clothing factory, "Balmoral", employs seventy locals, mostly women. A few women work in the AGE winery located just across the river in the autonomous community of Rioja. A number of Lapueblan men also work in AGE. Some informants of Elciego and Laguardia claimed that

Lapueblans' closer proximity to these industries better enabled them to engage in wage labor, and hence, to invest in more vineyards. According to them, Lapueblans did not have a superior work ethic, but more opportunities to earn capital to invest in viti-viniculture.

AGE and Balmoral are the two main employers of Lapueblans. AGE is the multi-nationally owned and operated winery located just across the river, in the autonomous community of Rioja, less than one kilometer south of Lapuebla. Balmoral is a women's undergarment and pajama factory located in Lapuebla. The owner, a Guipúzcoan man who moved to Lapuebla and established the factory eighteen years ago, described Balmoral as "the best vineyard in the pueblo." He said that women's salaries from the factory curbed out-migration from the village and provided funds for buying and improving vineyards. Many villagers also viewed the factory as an important base of local economy. As one man said, "although there's only a little more than sixty people working there, they are helping to feed the whole village."

Most employees are younger women. The trend had been for girls to work in Balmoral or AGE until they married. Now, many young mothers continue working in Balmoral while their mothers take care of their children. Several grandmothers complained that caring for the grandchildren was a harder job than working in the factory. Although the

building is clean and pleasant, the wages are low and there is no union organization. Twelve women in the village also do piece-work sewing from their homes for the factory. In addition to AGE and Balmoral, a construction company located in the village employed about thirteen local men, although it was due to close in early 1988. Several other men were employed by the Zanussi company, an Italian refrigerator manufacturing plant located across the Ebro in the autonomous community of Rioja.

Although the economic advantages of the factory work were recognized, some also felt that the relatively easy availability of work in Balmoral for girls, and work in the vineyards for boys, discouraged the younger generation's pursuit of higher education. This opinion was held by those in the village who were critical of what they perceived as an overzealous work ethic and consumer orientation of Lapueblans, and a disregard for "culture" and education. A young grower expressed this negative stereotype of his fellow villagers:

They are not like other people who look for an equilibrium between money and work. Here, the people want more and more. They are willing to work more and more, but I don't know for what, because later, they don't know what to do with their money. After all that work, all that effort, they think a vacation is a bad way to spend it . . . having a better house is a bad way to spend it. They'll fix up the outside of the house only, the facade is important because it shows the family has money. You'll see incredible people here-- people with a new car that cost two to three million pesetas, who, a short time ago, did not have a bathroom.

These are the kinds of criticisms and stereotypes of Lapueblans also voiced by Laguardians. Most Lapueblans, however, considered the work opportunities and improved living standards positively. One seventy-two year old Lapueblan reflects this common view:

It was hard times during the Civil War--hunger, black hunger. And, after the war, until the mid 1940s, things were very rough. Now life is better, they lack for nothing--maybe things are too easy. Lapuebla is a good place now because all the young people have jobs--the girls in Balmoral, the boys in the bodegas, Zanussi or the vineyards. If all of Spain could be like this village, it would be a good place.

Most Lapueblans I knew hoped their children would remain in the village and work towards improvement and expansion of the family vineyards. Several middle-aged growers said they wanted their children to marry in the village, preferably to someone who would also inherit vineyards, enabling the couple to make a living from the land with their combined inheritance. One man confided that village men used to try to negotiate advantageous marriages between their children. He mused that a man might say to his son, "Son, love is very fine, and you love that girl over there, but why cannot you love this girl, who has vineyards?" Today, with the ubiquity of the automobile, young people prefer to go to the discotheques and bars of Logroño and other nearby towns for entertainment, and many told me they wanted to date and marry people from other villages. Still, many boys are following in the vineyard work, and many girls view the lifestyle of the village



favorably, now that villagers enjoy modern amenities and a standard of living comparable to or better than the cities offer. High unemployment and decreased opportunities elsewhere encourage the young to stay home.

The comparative economic prosperity of recent years has not only improved living standards, but has also enabled Lapueblans to build upon their identification as hard-working grape growers and to embellish and elaborate social and ritual expressions of identity with a wine culture. This symbolic importance of the wine culture and heritage is exemplified in the contemporary uses of the traditional family bodegas.

#### The Family Bodega: Social and Symbolic Uses

Wine is a daily accompaniment to meals and local bar culture among men. The leather botas, or wine bags, are also carried to the campo. Women occasionally have a little wine with meals. Wine is also a central ingredient of all religious and secular festive meals. The family bodega was the site of much socializing related to wine-making in the past, and remains so for those who still make their own wine, especially in the few cases where the wooden wine press is still used. These bodegas are also traditional gathering places for men's friendship groups to meet and talk, eat and drink. They served this function more in the past, before people could afford to buy drinks in the bars as frequently as they do now. Several cuadrillas of older

men still meet regularly in each other's bodegas in Lapuebla.

In recent years, many families have remodeled the bodegas to include a rustic dining room, sometimes referred to as a merendero (literally translated, a place for eating the merienda, a light meal or snack typically taken in the late morning (10:00 - 11:00 a.m.) and/or afternoon (5:00 - 6:00 p.m.)). The merenderos are often built in the room that formerly housed the wooden wine press. They are usually furnished with a long wooden picnic table, benches, a sink and running water, and a fireplace in one corner where small lamb chops and chorizo sausages are grilled over the embers of dried sarmientos (the vine shoots cut during pruning of the grapevines). This is a favorite fiesta meal. Such rooms were also built onto the garage of some homes rather than at the bodega, as only one sibling usually inherits the bodega.

Even in Elciego and Laguardia where far fewer of the traditional bodegas are used to make wine nowadays, many families have installed merenderos and continue the use of the bodega as a social space for lively dinners and parties. Increased incomes finance the renovations of the merenderos and the provision of festive meals to large groups of family and friends. Visiting return migrants and summer residents consider the bodega festivities an integral part of the

quaintness and relaxed hospitality of life in the villages that they come to enjoy as a break from the hectic city.

Parrish (1984) noted that in some villages, locals had actually sold the family bodegas to Basque summer visitors, although this was not common in the villages I studied. Many Lapueblans did say that the northern Basques who visited the pueblo during the summer were great wine drinkers. They come to buy wine from the locals. And often, groups of tourists on day trips from the north will rent or borrow a family bodega for the day in order to make a meal and drink local wine in the quaint atmosphere of a family winery. An occasional bus tour group stops in Lapuebla and the visitors are guided through one of the old family bodegas and given a taste of the wine.

My neighbors, Julia and Pedro, established a relationship with a group from the north who came and used their bodega one day each summer for several consecutive years. They would buy wine from Pedro, and bring a gift of fresh fish from the north. Pedro had met the group when they came into a village bar and asked if anyone knew of a bodega they could use. Pedro invited them to use his. He did not charge them, and said the gift of fresh fish and the purchase of wine were adequate compensation.

To both visitors and locals, the bodega, with its associations to the traditional activities of wine making, is viewed as a social space for enjoying and celebrating the

wine. Although the bodegas are no longer used to make wine by most people in the Riojas, the social activities of the bodega perpetuate identity with the wine culture. Wages earned in other work are often invested in constructing merenderos in the bodegas. Engaging in wage labor has not meant disintegration of the culture and identity which grew from a more agricultural lifeway. Many in Rioja Alavesa work in both sectors, and, for those who no longer make their own wine, or who do not even grow grapes, the social space of the bodega and the festive and ritual meals shared there, serve as a symbolic link to the past. Similar to these observations, Gibson and Weinberg (1980) found that wine and wine drinking functioned as important symbols of cultural identity and preservation in the Swiss Alpine village of Bruson:

The last fifty years have seen a gradual erosion of village autonomy and increasing dependence of villagers on the outside world. . . . In the modernized village economy, wine is one of the few remaining products of Brusonians' own labors. As a palpable reminder of the agricultural tradition of the village, wine has become the symbolic medium in which past and present converge. (Gibson and Weinberg 1980:113,115)

With declining employment opportunities in the cities, and the relative prosperity of grape growers in recent years, rural life in the Riojas is increasingly viewed in a positive light by both locals and visitors. A few who left for the cities have returned and tried to re-establish themselves in viti-viniculture. Several wealthier return migrants I knew keep a few vineyards as a hobby, and are

enthusiastic about maintaining or regaining family "traditions." One man from Elciego, for example, had been a school teacher in Guipúzcoa for many years, but has moved back to his natal village. He and his wife bought some land and started to grow grapes. He said he hopes to convince a television station in Vitoria to film a documentary about the grape growers of Rioja Alavesa. He reflects the somewhat romanticized view of the work of the vineyards characteristic of some return migrants and visitors:

The vine is the vegetable element that most bonds to a people. If you plant vines, you have to pass four or five years with them, waiting for them to bear fruit. You can't leave for another place, because it would mean abandoning them. This creates the attachment of the man and the total identification with the vineyard --because it is what he planted and what he cares for. Besides, you pick the grape, make the wine, and then you drink it with friends.

Lapueblans have much reinforcement for their focus on the work of the vineyards as a worthwhile and rewarding pursuit, including the economic aid and promotional efforts of the autonomous Basque government which favor the small grape growers.

#### Basque Influences on Identity with the Wine Culture in Rioja Alavesa:

In this chapter, I have explored the regional and pueblo level identity with wine and the work of the vineyards from several perspectives. I wanted to discover if there are indications of expansion of a Basque identity to Rioja Alavesa evident in the context of identity with wine and the work of the vineyards. Proposing that the wine

culture is diagnostic of change may sound contradictory, since the environment, settlement pattern, and lifeways associated with the wine culture have been used by people throughout the Riojan wine district to distinguish themselves from neighboring geographic regions. Inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa point to the humid mountainous zone of the north as distinct from their own, associated more with a true Basque identity. Likewise, Basques from the north who vacation in the Riojas associate the geographic region, including both Rioja Alavesa and the autonomous community of Rioja, with the wines and bodega life they come to enjoy in the summers. It would appear that the environment and lifeways of the wine district serve as markers which would continue to distinguish Rioja Alaveses from northern Basques.

I contend that identity with the wine culture is being affected and influenced by Rioja Alaveses' incorporation into the autonomous Basque community. The effects of this process vary from individual to individual, although I have generalized to the pueblo level, based on variant perceptions of work ethics and values in three pueblos. Ironically, perhaps, of the three pueblos discussed above--Elciego, Laguardia and Lapuebla de Labarca, it is in the pueblo which can be defined as the most traditional in its involvement with the wine culture, Lapuebla, that more

inhabitants exhibited enthusiasm and support for a Basque political and cultural identity.

It is partly because of Lapueblans' greater adherence to expanding their vineyards and making their own wine that the Basque government's policies of economic aid to the small growers encourages their allegiance to that government. Certainly not all growers in Lapuebla who benefitted from the loan schemes supported the Basque political party whose government promulgated the agricultural development policies, nor did they all define themselves as Basques. But the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (Basque Nationalist Party) has held the majority of seats in the village government since the first post-Franco municipal elections in 1979, while other political parties have dominated in neighboring Laguardia and Elciego. These differential voting patterns will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Beyond political allegiance, the efforts of the Basque government to align the wine growing district of Rioja Alavesa with a Basque identity which ennobles rural values and hard work have served to enhance, rather than to diminish the identity of people in Rioja Alavesa with the wine complex. As described in the last chapter, Basque ideology incorporated rural symbols and values, especially those associated with the caseríos of the north. Now, this focus on a hard-working people living close to the earth

might be expanded to include the rural lifeways of Rioja Alavesa. Inhabitants may become "Basque" grape growers, and the wine a proud product of this unique Basque community. Therefore, for Lapueblans who already adhere to values of independence and hard work as part of their pueblo identity, a Basque ideology which recognizes these as desirable traits is in line with local values.

Other aspects of Basque ideology are also appealing to Lapueblans. Historical interpretations which depict Basques as having fended off outside invaders, thus enabling Basques to maintain their unique culture and language, can be translated to more general values of independence and egalitarianism, which are important to Lapueblans. Modern "invaders" might be viewed as the multi-national owned wineries which largely control the commercialization and marketing of Riojan wine. The Basque government's economic aid policies have been aimed at helping individuals, and now, small cooperative groups, to bottle and market their wine, thus countering dependence on the industrial wineries. In Lapuebla, where great value is placed on expanding vineyards and making wine, this policy favoring independent marketing is viewed as beneficial by Lapueblans in combatting the monopoly of industrial wineries. In spite of the fact that many were able to expand their holdings with wages earned in the industrial wineries and other wage work, there is a strong sentiment of wanting to be independent of



the large wineries. In the 1981 fiesta program of Lapuebla, an anonymous villager wrote:

The big installations of "factories" of wine have almost totally changed the family workways of the past. Today the prices of wine are not controlled by anyone but remain at the mercy of the free play of the offers and demands of a market that is manipulated by the intervention of the great multi-national corporations, to the detriment of the wine grower and consumer. (Cuatro Siglos Despues 1981)

Further, the policies of both the Basque and Riojan autonomous governments are serving to differentiate identity between the growers on either side of the Ebro. The growers belong to separate unions, and are becoming more aware of the political boundary of the Ebro. Although the entire Riojan wine district is controlled by the single Wine Control Board, the growers' ability to unite against the industrial wineries for better prices and other concessions may be diminished by increasing differentiation between the autonomous communities. Since the Basque government is able to offer more economic aid to growers than the Riojan government, growers in Rioja Alavesa may achieve greater independence from the large wineries and be able to improve and expand their operations more than growers in the autonomous community of Rioja. This differential aid might contribute to variant self-perceptions as independent growers on either side of the Ebro.

The Riojan government has also been promoting the wine culture as definitive of a Riojan identity, excluding the wine-producing zones such as Rioja Alavesa which are not

within the political borders of the autonomous community of Rioja. As noted in the last chapter, Rioja Alaveses resent this monopoly of the name they feel they rightly share. Since they feel they are being alienated from the name by the autonomous community of Rioja, growers in Rioja Alavesa may be more open to representing themselves as "Basque" growers.

It could be said that the authorities of the Basque and Riojan autonomous governments are competing to associate the lucrative wine district with their respective political communities. A politically neutral geographic wine district which overlaps provincial boundaries is becoming a less viable base for regional identity in Rioja Alavesa. On the more local level, the aid available to growers in Rioja Alavesa is helping Lapueblans enhance and reinforce their pueblo identity to a greater degree than in Elciego or Laguardia. This leads to the question of whether some pueblos in Rioja Alavesa will incorporate a Basque identity more enthusiastically than others. I contend this is happening, as I will further exemplify in comparisons of Lapuebla and Laguardia in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7  
LAPUEBLA AND LAGUARDIA: PUEBLO AND BASQUE IDENTITY

From a distance, the turreted, walled-in pueblo of Laguardia, encircling a hilltop in the open landscape, evokes an image of feudal times. Little imagination is required to conjure a picture of an armored knight, a hooded monk, or peasants in homespun approaching the village. The village's past serves as a primary component of Laguardia's identity. Inhabitants relate smatterings of their history to even the casual visitor. On my initial explorations of the village, shopkeepers and bartenders told me with pride of the pueblo's origins as a fortress of the Kingdom of Navarra in the tenth century, and directed me to visit the two village churches dating from medieval times. The hilltop site offered strategic advantage in the frequent battles among the early Christian kings. Laguardia served as a primary defense of the southern border of the Kingdom of Navarra against the encroaching Kingdom of Castile. Many Laguardians are proud of their Navarrese heritage. The first day I visited the village, an innkeeper I asked directions from told me that the pueblo "had been part of Navarra until not long ago." "Not long ago" was 1486 when Laguardia was incorporated into the Hermandad de Alava.

When visiting in the home of one Laguardian housewife, she explained that her house is located in the old Jewish quarter of town, and, although the Jews were forced to convert to Catholicism or leave Spain in 1492, the village religious processions to this day do not pass through that part of the village. One friend guided me through part of the underground labyrinth of wine cellars beneath the village, and explained that during various wars, from medieval to modern times, people hid in these dark and winding cellars. As I wandered the narrow streets with a village schoolteacher, he pointed out the homes of formerly wealthy landlords, and said I could tell these dwellings by the carved stone escudos (family coats of arms) above the doors. Although many of these affluent families sold vineyards and migrated during the decades of depressed wine sales from the Spanish Civil War through the 1960s, the escudos are a reminder of a noble past. As one local observer put it, "though poor, a man can look at the family escudo and puff up with pride."

The pueblo's history as a fortress and administrative seat of the smaller, surrounding pueblos as well as the still inhabited medieval edifices, tie Laguardia's identity to the past. Many dwellings within the medieval walls have been renovated into modern apartments. Around 908, the Navarrese King Sancho Abarca built a castle at the site to guard against the encroachments of both Moors and

Castilians. The center grew, and was sometimes occupied by the kings of Navarra. In 1164, Laguardia was granted the status of villa, with its own fuero, by Sancho VI el Sabio of Navarra. Sancho VII el Fuerte (1194-1234) fortified the site by building the protective walls which still enclose the village (Ajamil et al. 1985:22-24). Laguardians' pride in a colorful past and impressive architecture is fostered by the village's increasing popularity as a tourist attraction. Bus tours now stop in Laguardia, and a village tourist office and local museum have been established.

All but two of the surrounding pueblos gained independence from Laguardia, establishing their own municipal governments and territories, by the seventeenth century. Lapuebla de Labarca is a former aldeia (hamlet) of Laguardia. It does not have the architectural beauty and symmetry of its larger, walled fortress neighbor. Lapuebla is built on a gently sloping bank of the Ebro River, and the barrios of houses form tiers on the hillside, giving a more dispersed appearance to the village in comparison to the circular, walled pattern of Laguardia. New apartment buildings and homes are interspersed with the old on the wider, more open streets. I did not take note of any grand señorial houses with escudos above the doors. Lapuebla, as inhabitants informed me, was settled by laborers, convicts and outcasts sent from Laguardia who worked for or paid

tribute to the wealthy Laguardian landowners until Lapuebla gained independence.

Lapuebla had its beginnings in 1369 when a few dwellings were built near the site of a ferry crossing of the Ebro, and gradually expanded as more settlers came, or were sent, to the area. When uniform peace was established with the centralization of state authority in the late fifteenth century, the aldeas of Laguardia attracted more settlers and grew rapidly during the sixteenth century. In 1631, the title of villa was granted to Lapuebla, which gave the community status as an independent municipality entitled to its own government and common lands. A formal boundary line between the village territories of Lapuebla and Laguardia, delimited by stone markers, was measured off in 1791 (Velilla 1987).

In contrast to the inhabitants of Laguardia, natives of Lapuebla did not immediately regale me with snippets of local history, or guide me to inspect medieval village architecture. Although proud of the village church, built over the course of a century from the mid-1600s to 1764, it was not one of the first pueblo sites villagers encouraged me to see. My primary guides, the cuadrilla of housewives I went walking with on those crisp, spring afternoons, first took me to inspect the recently built handball fronton and pueblo swimming pool, and showed me the construction site of the new school due to be completed during my stay. The

fronton was completed in 1984 and the pool in 1982. Although not everyone in Lapuebla was pleased about the addition of these amenities, many expressed pride that the pueblo could boast such fine new edifices.

In contrasting themselves to their neighbors in Laguardia, as well as to the two other nearby larger and more architecturally beautiful pueblos of Elciego and Fuenmayor, Lapueblans invariably told me they were the hardest workers, the least class divided, and the friendliest of the pueblos. A middle-aged Lapueblan housewife described her perception of the differences between the pueblos:

The character of Laguardia is very distinct from Lapuebla. And Elciego the same. Lapuebla is much more friendly. In Elciego and Laguardia the people feel superior, they are big show-offs, and more elegant. Here we are more frank and open-hearted.

Common adjectives which Lapueblans used to describe Elciego and Laguardia, as well as Fuenmayor, the village just across the Ebro, were: más elegante (more elegant), más capital (more of a principal town), más señorito (more pretentious). Another Lapueblan made the following comments in explaining why he thought Laguardia had a more distinguished status than Lapuebla:

Franco confessed daily to a priest born in Laguardia. For this Laguardia is more illustrious. And it is older and larger. Laguardia was the rampart of the Carlists. During the Carlist war, they had a cannon posted in Laguardia, because it is walled in.

This story also reflects Lapueblans' perception of Laguardia as politically conservative--a priest from Laguardia was Franco's confessor, and Laguardia was associated with the Carlists, who sided with Franco during the Civil War, as discussed in Chapter Three. Lapueblans often referred to their heritage as workers and outcasts with a certain pride. The status of the village ancestors as underdogs was sometimes given as an explanation for contemporary Lapueblans' superior work ethic. As one young Lapueblan grower told me:

In Lapuebla, the people are very hard workers, people who fight for their share. Lapuebla was founded by workers from Laguardia. All the land was owned by the patrones of Laguardia and they built houses here for their workers to labor in the vineyards in the 1400s. These ancestors were clearly workers.

Lapueblans explained that they were able to acquire their own vineyards and become their own bosses sooner than the workers of Laguardia since Lapuebla gained status as an independent villa in 1631. A more egalitarian distribution of land in Lapuebla was thought to have fostered dedication to improving family holdings there, while many in Laguardia continued to work as day laborers for a few wealthy families until quite recently. A man from Laguardia commented:

They have always labelled us with the fame of being bad workers. In reality, this is not so. Laguardia has not had the opportunity other pueblos have had because it is a more ancient pueblo. Because of this, its history has marked its character, including its socioeconomic character. Other pueblos have not had the same problem of the aristocracy, of landowners. Their lands were more divided although they had less land.



Another middle-aged man from Laguardia reflects the idea that the differences between Lapuebla and Laguardia result from different pueblo economies and work ethics:

Those who are in Laguardia today, work with the same intensity as the surrounding pueblos. But, there is one thing, the surrounding pueblos do not respect Laguardia. It is ridiculous. The way of life in Laguardia is more generous, it is not as thrifty. People here do not need as much to live. In the pueblos around here, I don't want to cite names, but this is objective, there is much showing off, spending, a consumer culture. . . . They work from morning until night and the day that they can't go to the vineyard to work, they don't know what to do. They have a lot of money, but they save and save, to fix up their houses, but they do not know how to live. . . . They work without control. On the other hand, the people of Laguardia have always been more fun-loving.

While this Laguardian explained his pueblo's reputation for a less serious work ethic than some surrounding pueblos in a very positive light, most Lapueblans interpreted Laguardians' reputation for festivity negatively, depicting them as vagos (lazy people) who had more interest in partying than in working. Lapueblans usually explained this poor work ethic as due to Laguardians' status as exploited laborers as compared to Lapueblans' status as independent growers. They noted that there were 25 bars in Laguardia compared to three in Lapuebla, for a population not quite two times as large (the population of Lapuebla is 824, and of Laguardia, 1,531). One older Lapueblan grower said he and his friends used to court the girls of Laguardia because the girls preferred them to the local boys, who, he said, were "mostly alcoholics."

On another occasion, I accompanied a Lapueblan couple, José and Nati, to the patron saint's fiesta in Laguardia. On the way, they stopped to show me some vineyards they had recently bought near Laguardia. Nati proudly told me of all the work her husband and son had done there, pointing to the weed-free, neatly plowed renques. She and José also wanted me to inspect the adjacent vineyard, owned by a Laguardian grower, which was in need of care. José said he had tried to buy this vineyard, but the owner did not want to sell. José thought this was a shame since the owner did not care for the land as José thought he should. Some hours later, when we were observing the street festivities in Laguardia, a small band passed, and José pointed to a very jolly looking fellow playing in the band. "There," José said, "is the rascal who owns that vineyard I showed you. You see these Laguardians would rather party than work."

When I picked grapes with my Lapueblan neighbors who were being helped by friends from Laguardia, the Lapueblan woman I was working with said, "well, these Laguardians are o.k., but they generally are not hard workers and will all head to the bars and get drunk when we are finished here." The Laguardians, as the earlier comment of the Laguardian informant indicates, counter this negative stereotype. Laguardians accuse Lapueblans of being workaholics, obsessed with conspicuous consumption, unable to enjoy life. These contrasting pueblo stereotypes were also discussed in the

last chapter, and related to the quality of village wine and to the customs of wine making.

Thus, Lapueblans have defined themselves as harder workers and more egalitarian than neighboring villagers. I propose that Lapueblans compensate for any lack of architectural beauty or flamboyant history with these other attributes. Although the work ethic and democratic spirit were often explained as evolving from the pueblo's history, the focus of village pride was on the new, evidence of the inhabitants' hard work. Even critics within the village, who considered the new buildings beyond the needs and means of the pueblo, or who were critical of what they perceived as an over-emphasis in the village on work and material consumption, nonetheless agreed that Lapueblans were hard workers and that this distinguished them from their more "cultured," larger neighbors.

Identity with one's pueblo, as distinct and defined from neighboring pueblos, was a prevalent sentiment expressed both during more formal interviews as well as in unsolicited comments made during participation in daily activities. The importance of the pueblo or village as a primary source of social identity has been noted by numerous observers and scholars of Spain and other European communities (Freeman 1979, Kuter 1985, Gross 1978, Lison Tolosana 1977, Pratt 1980, Kenny 1969, Medhurst 1973, Wolf and Cole 1974, Cohen 1982, Lisón Arcal 1986, Elías Pastor

1982b). Freeman concludes, "the pueblo is the maximal unit of cooperation, of common festivals and of social identity in most contexts" (Freeman 1979:161). Lisón Tolosana observes "local emotive solidarity establishes at the same time limits and categories of internal-external, manifest attitudes, expressed beliefs and values" (Lisón Tolosana 1977:18).

The pueblo boundary still serves as one of the first delimiters of group identity the rural Spaniard learns, an identity which takes shape "in opposition to the other" (Sahlins 1989:272). The "others" are the near neighboring villagers. Longstanding jokes, insults, nicknames and stereotypes form part of village folk tradition learned from childhood. For example, in addition to the pueblo stereotypes discussed above, Lapueblans also use nicknames to distinguish themselves from their neighbors. Those from Fuenmayor are called by the derogatory slang term, "fuchano." Another nickname used by Lapueblans for their neighbors in Fuenmayor, and also used by those in Fuenmayor for Lapueblans, is rabudo. This name derives from rabo, meaning "tail," and signifies that both Fuenmayor and Lapuebla are situated at the "tail end" of their respective provinces. The nickname plays upon the border status of each pueblo. Laguardians have been referred to by Lapueblans as "alvejeros" because it is said that they ate alverja (tare - weeds) when they were poor and without food.

This nickname reflects Lapueblans' depiction of the majority of Laguardians as landless laborers. Lapueblans' nicknames for inhabitants of Elciego, on the other hand, also reflect a view of class division in Elciego, but satirize the elites rather than the poorer class. Lapueblans call those from Elciego "farrucos" (show-offs). Another nickname for people from Elciego is "bastones," which literally means "walking sticks." A young man from Lapuebla explained that this nickname evolved because there used to be two different paseos (promenades) in Elciego, one for the village aristocrats and another for the workers. The aristocrats used fancy walking sticks, thus the nickname "bastones." These nicknames form part of a verbal lore which serves to enforce pueblo identities.

Class division did exist in Lapuebla. There had been about three wealthy landowning families in the past, who have divided and sold land in recent decades, resulting in a greater distribution and leveling of property ownership. I also heard resentment expressed towards a few nouveau riche in the village--especially towards one man who had amassed numerous vineyards. But to the outsider, Lapueblans will readily claim "todos somos iguales aquí" (we are all equal here). This is an ideological statement if not a totally accurate reality, used by Lapueblans to distinguish themselves from neighbors. Lapueblans' profess they have a more egalitarian and democratic society than their larger,

"mas señorito" neighbors. Barrett (1974) also found an ideology of egalitarianism in the Huescan village he studied, which did not reflect the class divisions within the village.

Identification with one's pueblo does not mean that conflict and rivalry within villages--between individuals, families, barrios, or classes, does not exist. Adherence to varying political parties is increasing intrapueblo conflict. However, notwithstanding these differences within, the pueblo is still an important means of categorization for "insider-outsider," "us and them." A schoolteacher from Laguardia who lives and works in a village in the autonomous community of Rioja but returns to Laguardia most weekends expressed sentiment for his natal pueblo as follows:

I'm probably a lot like an individual from a neighboring village, but, when it comes to the pueblo as a whole, we're very different. If I'm nationalist or patriotic about anything, it is on this level of the pueblo. I'm very proud to be identified with Laguardia. People from Lapuebla, well, even though we have friends from there, they are not the same.

This informant claimed a stronger sense of identity, belonging, and patriotism to his natal village than to the region, autonomous community, or nation state. His statement is representative of the kind of pueblo allegiance I detected in many informants. But pueblo identity is not unrelated to other identity levels, and is subject to change. A brief overview of the establishment of pueblos in

northern Spain in general will contribute to a diachronic perspective on pueblo identity.

The Evolution of "Pueblos" in Northern Spain

"Pueblo," according to Lisón Tolosana, is a term used in Spain since the first half of the twelfth century. It is an ambiguous designation because it can refer to communities as small as 500 to 1,000 inhabitants, or to administrative heads of districts including cities as large as 30,000 to 100,000. He defines the most common image of the Spanish pueblo, however, "as a community of about 1,000 people with their own ayuntamiento (village government)" (Lisón Tolosana 1977:69). The villages of Rioja Alavesa fit this common image, with population ranging from 191 to 2411 (Gobierno Vasco 1986).

The small, more democratically-governed pueblo is associated with northern Spain, while the larger "agro-towns" described by Gilmore (1980) and Brandes (1980), are typical of southern Spain. This divergence is partly due to the patterns of resettlement during different periods of the Reconquest. During the tenth and eleventh centuries, as the north was the first area to be regained from the Moors, the Christian kings awarded privileges such as guaranteed defense and distribution of land to attract Christian settlers from the mountains of the north to repopulate the newly conquered lands. Land could often be claimed by the occupation and working of it. Grants were also formally

made between the kings and groups of settlers. By the tenth century, small freeholders were joining together to form consejos (village councils) to voice common problems. The transformation of the local consejos into official municipalities began in the eleventh century; such municipalities were common throughout Castile and Leon by the twelfth century (Lisón Tolosana 1977:64).

As the Christian victories spread to the south in the twelfth through the fourteenth centuries, the victorious military orders and powerful nobles were often awarded large expanses of land, laying the foundations for the latifundia land system which came to predominate in the south, as compared to the smaller settlements of the north. Lisón Tolosana posits that the heritage of these differing settlement patterns has fostered greater internal solidarity and pueblo identity in the north and more class orientation and identification in the south, where the majority work as landless laborers for large landholders (Lisón Tolosana 1977:68). Gilmore (1980) also makes this observation.

The territory of the Riojas was one of the earliest areas of resettlement following the reconquest of Nájera and Viguera by Sancho Garcés I of Navarra in 923. Basques from the north came to the zone, as discussed in Chapter Three. Collins (1986) posits that the customs of these northern Basque migrants, who had traditions of village self-rule, may have influenced the formation of the independent



municipalities in the areas where they settled. But local "independence" was gained at different rates in the pueblos of Rioja and Rioja Alavesa.

During the turbulent thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, characterized by violence and warfare between the Christian kings and nobles, as well as frequent threats and raids from marauding bands, the smaller settlements came under the protection of the walled villas where inhabitants could seek shelter when needed. The wealthier landlords and the priests, artisans, craftsmen and merchants lived within the villas, while inhabitants of the aldeas were mostly poorer--independent peasant farmers, sharecroppers working for the richer landlords, or, the lowest class, landless agricultural laborers (Sáinz Ripa 1983b:204-208). As noted, Lapuebla was initially such an aldea to the villa of Laguardia.

The small communities came to depend on a wealthy landlord, or a nearby monastery, for both protection and for credit when crops were bad. It was not until the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, with the advent of peace under the centralizing regime of the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella, that the aldeas attracted more settlers and developed as independent villas. Lapuebla did not gain independence from Laguardia until 1631. The village of Elciego gained independence from Laguardia in

1532, and still holds an annual "independence" day fiesta to commemorate the pueblo's establishment as a villa.

Upon closer scrutiny, the depiction of southern Spain as characterized by "latifundia, undemocratic, landless laborers" and northern Spain as characterized by "minifundia, democratic, independent peasant landholders" is too simplistic. Rather than a completely democratic society of propertied smallholders, a variety of classes coexisted in the north from the earliest days of the Reconquest resettlements. In contrast, there was a greater disparity between two distinct classes--landholders with extensive properties and landless laborers, in the south. As exemplified by the development and interrelationships of the villas and their dependent aldeas, such as Laguardia and Lapuebla, different pueblos within an area have divergent histories and class orientations which have affected the formation of contemporary pueblo identities and stereotypes. The pueblos' relationships with the wider political and economic sectors have affected the development of pueblo identity since the Reconquest.

The Pueblo, The Province, The Region, The Nation:

Evidence from Rioja Alavesa indicates that individuals may adapt and adopt identities with larger political, regional or ethnic communities without necessarily sacrificing identity with the local community. Peter Sahlins (1989) found this to be the case in his provocative

historical analysis of the evolution of French and Spanish nationality in Cerdanya, a Catalan valley in the Pyrenees arbitrarily divided by the political border between France and Spain. Sahllins demonstrates how local communities participated in and manipulated the construction of national identity:

States did not simply impose their values and boundaries on local society. Rather, local society was a motive force in the formation and consolidation of nationhood and the territorial state. (Sahllins 1989:8)

Moreover, he found "contextual and differential affirmation of national identity"---individuals and communities identified to various degrees with the wider, encompassing communities (Sahllins 1989:273).

In the case of Lapuebla and Laguardia, interrelations and realignments of the local community with the provincial, regional and national communities in the post-Franco era are contributing to further variations on the themes of pueblo-level identities. During Franco's forty year regime, educational and political institutions, and much of the government controlled media, focused on imbuing the populace with a strong national identity as Spaniards. Dios y Patria (God and Fatherland) were the powerful symbols invoked by Francoism. Ethnic and regional allegiances were repressed and no legitimate channels for their expression were permitted. These strictures were eased slightly in the late 1950s, when a few minor concessions were made to permit the expression of regional languages and folk arts.

Alava and Navarra, although historically considered "Basque" provinces, received preferential benefits under Franco in comparison to Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, as discussed in Chapter Three. In Rioja Alavesa, there was neither a legitimate, nor an underground grassroots framework for identifying as Basques politically, culturally or ideologically under Franco. Indeed, local and provincial political authority in general were diminished under the regime's centralization policies. Both provincial governors as well as pueblo mayors were political appointees of the regime (Medhurst 1973). The Ebro River boundary dividing the Basque province of Alava and the province of Logroño was de-emphasized.

The provincial government of Alava performed mostly administrative functions in Rioja Alavesa. The politically neutral identity of the zone as part of the geographic wine-growing region of Rioja predominated over cultural or political identification as Basque. A Spanish national identity was inculcated by the media and school system. The more potent social identity remained the local village, the primary boundary between "us" and "them," in spite of intrapueblo divisions during the Civil War and the pueblo's diminished political autonomy under Franco.

Since democratization, the establishment of the autonomous communities has resulted in legitimate, institutionalized channels for the expression of a Basque

identity. Democratic elections at each administrative level open the possibility of choosing Basque political parties. The legitimization and recognition of the Basque autonomous community by the Spanish state fosters the political and cultural development of the Basque ethnic nation.

Ethnographic research in the villages of Rioja Alavesa revealed processes of nation building at work, but not uniformly. In the previous chapter, I explored how pueblo and regional identity with wine and the work of the vineyards are being affected by Rioja Alavesa's incorporation into the Basque Country. In the remainder of this chapter, I will describe how Lapuebla and Laguardia differ in pueblo-level expressions of Basque identity.

Pueblo Identity - Basque Identity: Adaptations and Transformations in Lapuebla and Laguardia:

I found three indices of pueblo expression which were indicative of a different rate and intensity of adoption and expression of Basque identity in Lapuebla and in Laguardia. These are: the selection of Basque political parties, the incorporation of Basque markers and customs into pueblo ritual, and the introduction of the Basque language, Euskera, in the pueblo schools. The differential expression of Basque identity between Lapuebla and Laguardia reflects the two pueblos' distinct local identities and orientations. The varying incorporation of Basque identity adds new dimensions to local identity, without replacing it.

Political Dimensions of Pueblo Identity:

The relationship of political party preference and ethnic identity in the Basque Country was discussed in Chapter Three. In Clark's (1987) comparison of voting patterns in Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and Alava from 1979 to 1986, he found the highest percentage of votes for Basque political parties in Guipúzcoa, and the lowest percentage in Alava. Guipúzcoa is the home of the highest percentage of Euskera speakers in the Basque Country, while Alava has the lowest percentage of Euskera speakers. Thus, it appears that there is a correlation between support of Basque political parties and the ethnic marker of speaking Euskera. As discussed in Chapter Three, Clark described votes for any of the Basque parties as "rejectionist" in the sense of rejecting central government in favor of Basque autonomy or independence.

Rejectionist voting is sometimes interpreted as an indicator of Basque patriotism and Basque identity. For example, Palacios (1978), who favors a Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa, correlates support for any of the four Basque political parties with Basque patriotism in Rioja Alavesa:

In 1977 (in the first post-Franco democratic elections), PNV received a third of the votes of Rioja Alavesa. For those who had announced the liquidation of the Basque cause in this frontier of Alava, it was, evidently, a big surprise. Forty years of repression were not enough to stop the national sentiment of the Basques of Rioja Alavesa, situated so close to the Castilian lands. . . . Whichever of the Basque parties is chosen, they signify for the voters of Rioja Alavesa something singular, Basque, in opposition to the

constituted powers and the centralist parliament.  
(Palacios 1978:27-28)

Although support for the Basque political parties indicates some degree of Basque nationalist sentiment, motivations for supporting the PNV or the other Basque parties are more complex than Palacios' equation indicates. First, it must be remembered that there are four Basque parties, as explained in Chapter Three, with varying political ideologies. The PNV (Partido Nacionalista Vasco - Basque Nationalist Party) and its splinter party, EA (Eusko Alkartasuna - Basque Solidarity) represent more conservative, middle class platforms. HB (Herri Batasuna - Popular Unity) and EE (Euzkadiko Ezkerra - Basque Left) are socialist, and, in the case of HB, revolutionary. Even if votes for any of these parties indicate an anti-centralist option and an allegiance to Basque nationalism, adherents to these parties are by no means united in their political ideologies. For example, supporters of both the PSOE (Partido Socialista de Obreros Españoles - Spanish Worker's Socialist Party) and the EE criticized supporters of both the PNV and AP (Alianza Popular - Popular Alliance) for political and economic conservatism. Some supporters of the Basque Left may consider that they have more in common with the Spanish socialist party than with the conservative Basque parties.

The intersections of class and ethnic motivations in voting patterns is complex. For example, Herri Batasuna,

the Basque revolutionary party, in emphasizing class issues over ethnic issues, has gained votes outside of the Basque Country. Correlating support for a Basque political party with a strong sense of Basque identity is too simplistic. Clark concludes that even though statistics show the highest percentage of rejectionist voting in the Basque zones which have the highest percentage of Euskera speakers:

Not everyone who votes 'rejectionist' does so for ethnic nationalist reasons or would identify him/herself as being of the ethnic group. People obviously vote for a given party option for many different reasons, including perhaps those having little to do with ethnic questions. (1987:430)

I found motivations for the support of the PNV and other Basque parties varied in Lapuebla. Many informants, for example, said they voted for the PNV for practical reasons, while remaining ambivalent about a Basque ethnic identity. The 1987 election of pueblo officials provided an opportunity to analyze and compare voting patterns between Lapuebla and Laguardia. This micro approach revealed a relationship between pueblo identity and voting patterns which is overlooked in macro level regional analyses of voting patterns. For example, Clark's (1987) findings that Alava has had the lowest percentage of votes for Basque political parties of the three Basque provinces fails to account for differences in voting patterns between municipalities within Alava. Analysis at the municipal level indicates more support for Basque parties in some villages than in others. Likewise, Palacios' (1978)



generalization that one third of the votes from Rioja Alavesa for Basque parties means a revival of Basque identity and patriotism in the entire zone becomes questionable when village level data are considered. Non-Basque parties are favored in some villages.

In the election of local officials--pueblo mayors and councilmen--which took place in June, 1987, Lapueblas elected a mayor and four councilmen of the PNV, one councilman of the Basque party, EA, and one councilman of the conservative, centrist party, AP (Alianza Popular). This continued the pueblo's choice of the PNV to lead the local government since the first post-Franco municipal elections in 1979. Laguardians, in contrast, elected to a third term a mayor who ran as an "independent," and four councilmen who also ran as "independents;" one socialist (PSOE); and three councilmen of Basque parties (two of the PNV, one of EA). The vote count for the municipal elections of 1987 is summarized in the following table:

Table 2. 1987 Municipal Election Results for Lapuebla and Laguardia

| Villages  | Total<br>Number<br>Eligible<br>Voters | Votes for Parties |      |     |    |     |     |      |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------|-----|----|-----|-----|------|
|           |                                       | PNV               | PSOE | EA  | HB | AP  | CDS | Ind. |
| Lapuebla  | 640                                   | 309               | 42   | 115 |    | 109 |     |      |
| Laguardia | 1,218                                 | 237               | 100  | 93  | 70 |     | 79  | 435  |

(El Correo Español, El Pueblo Vasco, June 11, 1987:41)

These election results demonstrate the variety of political opinion within the pueblos, and, indeed, show that even in Laguardia, a high percentage of the voting public did vote for Basque parties: a total of 400 votes (39% of total votes cast) for PNV, EA and HB combined. A higher percentage, however, voted for non-Basque parties, 614 votes (61% of total votes cast) for PSOE, CDS and the Independents. CDS (Centro Democrático y Social - Democratic and Social Center) is a centrist Spanish party which formed in 1982 with the break up of the UCD (Unión de Centro Democrático - Union of the Democratic Center). In Lapuebla, Basque parties received the majority of votes, 424 (74% of total votes cast) for PNV and EA, the other parties (AP and PSOE) received 151 (26%) of the votes.

In spite of the significant variations in support given to the different political parties within the pueblos, inhabitants of each village embellished their stereotypes of the other based on the majority composition of the municipal governments. Lapuebla was viewed as a "pro-Basque" pueblo by Laguardians, although some Laguardians expressed cynicism about Lapuebla's identity as Basque. One Laguardian man, a supporter of the AP party, told me that one nickname Laguardians have of Lapueblans is chaqueteros (turncoats), "because they change their jacket each season according to the weather." He said he thought no one in Lapuebla had been Basque ten years ago and that Basque sentiment "was not

deep in their soul"--he thought they would "change their jackets again" without the economic incentives now provided by the autonomous Basque government. A Laguardian housewife said she thought that Lapueblans were pro-Basque since they were closer to the Ebro River border dividing Rioja Alavesa from the autonomous community of Rioja, and used alignment with the Basques to feel superior to their neighbors across the river.

On the other hand, Lapueblans used the election of the local independent party to hold the majority of seats in the municipal government of Laguardia to reaffirm their stereotype of Laguardians. Laguardians were described to me by several inhabitants of Lapuebla as politically "conservative," exemplified by the "cacique-like" independents elected to lead the village government. One young woman from Lapuebla, a supporter of the PSOE, said she thought "the wall of Laguardia represents the 'medieval mentality' of the people--wanting to keep other people, and progress, out." She said people in Laguardia felt proud and superior "with their escudos on their houses," and that the old cliques of the wealthy and formerly wealthy maintained control. Another Lapueblan, a young grower and PNV supporter, said that many in Laguardia still worked as laborers for the remaining wealthy landowners and, due to indebtedness to them, and dependence on them, were obliged to vote for the political party of these elites. In

Lapuebla, a village perceived as being composed of mostly independent smallholders, the PNV is considered by many Lapueblans to be supportive of the growers. Laguardia is viewed by Lapueblans as being class divided and still led by an elite landlord class.

In actuality, nearly 10% of Laguardians who voted supported the Spanish Socialists (PSOE) and 7% voted for the radical Basque party, HB. These results could also be interpreted as indication of class division in the village. In Lapuebla, only 7.3% voted for PSOE and HB received no votes. Nineteen percent of Lapueblan voters voted for the conservative AP party. Although these election results indicate that village support for the leading political party of each village was far from unanimous, identity at the pueblo level was colored and affected by which party led the municipal governments. PNV's majority in Lapuebla prompted surrounding villagers to classify the pueblo as "pro-Basque." Although many supporters of the PNV in Lapuebla also depicted themselves as "pro-Basque," a number of informants said they voted for the PNV mainly because they thought the party was doing good things for the village, not because of a committed allegiance to a Basque political party, or because of a strong sense of Basque patriotism. They referred to the fronton, the pool, the school, and improvements to the roads and paths to the vineyards as evidence of the PNV's betterment of the

village. The party's campaign promise of a village irrigation system was seen as another benefit to be gained by voting for the PNV. A middle-aged housewife told me:

It has to be recognized that the PNV here in the pueblo has done many things and that is why we're voting for them in this election. Now they have planned a village irrigation facility and this is very important. With the vote you can help them return to go out and work better.

Similarly, one young grower told me all the improvements to the village, in addition to the loans available to individuals to purchase farm machinery, install modern bodegas and improve the vineyards, were good reasons to be Basque. He and his father were two of the more successful growers in Lapuebla, and fervent supporters of the PNV. This young man, in his late twenties, explained that he did not think about a having Basque identity in his youth because the Franco regime had repressed Basques. He then related how the Basques have survived a long history of repression by the Romans, Visigoths, Moors, French and Franco. His positive valuation of independent grower status, and the PNV's economic support to the small growers, are in line with Basque values of independence from outside oppressors.

Although many Lapueblans cited the perceived material benefits as motivating them to vote for the PNV, others raised questions as to just how economically beneficial to the village the new school and fronton would be. Even some who were proud of the new edifices questioned their

practicality. For example, on a second tour to inspect progress on the construction of the new school, the women in the cuadrilla pondered how, exactly, the school would be paid for--whether only those parents of children using the school, or all taxpaying villagers, would contribute to its upkeep. They expressed some doubt that children from surrounding pueblos would come to the school and therefore contribute to its cost, as was anticipated by the Ayuntamiento. Some wondered if the building might be too big for such a small pueblo. They speculated whether there would be any jobs for local women to clean the school. One woman looked around and said, "all these doors and windows are attractive, but not very economical." I heard similar doubts about the large and elaborate handball fronton, which was completed in 1984.

The mayor and councilmen planned and negotiated the loans and grants from the provincial and autonomous governments for the construction of the pool, fronton, school and improvements to the vineyard roads. The pueblo as a whole did not vote in a referendum to approve these projects. But, the re-election of the party which secured the projects indicate the majority's approval of them. In each case, the pueblo contributed part of the costs, while the autonomous and provincial governments provided the majority of financial support in the form of grants and low interest loans.

Some also wondered about the potential risk of taking out large loans, even at low interest, for new farm equipment, and for the renovation of family wineries. Such misgivings were voiced more by those in the village who did not support the PNV, but there were even some occasional doubts regarding economic benefit expressed among those who favored the PNV and its projects.

One must, then, question the frequent local explanation of material benefit as motivating support for the PNV in Lapuebla. Perhaps there is more here, something to do with pueblo identity and pride, something to do with the historical differences, and longstanding rivalries, between neighboring pueblos. The school and the fronton are impressive edifices Lapueblans can boast of to outsiders; they serve as symbols of pueblo prosperity and forward vision. The medieval walls of Laguardia, the noble houses adorned with their escudos, are viewed by Lapueblans as symbols of elitism and class division. Laguardia, Fuenmayor, and Elciego, Lapuebla's nearest neighbors, may be larger and more elegant, but many Lapueblans consider that they, through hard work, have become more prosperous, and that they better embody the democratic ideals of the post-Franco era. Their pueblo ideology of democratic egalitarianism is in line with Basque ideals of democracy.

Laguardians, however, sometimes explain Lapueblans' work ethic as compensation for an inferiority complex vis à

vis the larger, more sophisticated surrounding pueblos. Lapueblans themselves, on occasion, also expressed a need to "measure up" to the larger neighboring villages. The following comments were made by a woman and her twenty-three year old son during a family interview in Lapuebla:

Son: There is friction between pueblos. . . . Everyone thinks that they are the best.

Mother: For example, people from Logroño feel superior because it is bigger, it has more tourists and government offices. We, how can we put it?

Son: We do not want to be inferior. (mother and teenage daughter voice their agreement)

Mother: And with those from Fuenmayor, don't tell me anything. They have always felt superior, because their village is bigger . . . and we do not want to remain behind.

Today, in addition to their perceived superior work ethic, better wine, more egalitarian class structure, and friendlier manner, Lapueblans can point to the new buildings and vineyard roads as tangible evidence of their progress and ability to compete. They are not being "left behind" to be thought of as the smallest and least illustrious among their nearest neighbors--Laguardia, Fuenmayor and Elciego.

In addition, village support of the PNV has gained Lapuebla the recognition and approbation of the leaders of the party. Lapueblans have been proud to host two different presidents of the autonomous community when they visited the village to inaugurate the fronton in 1984 and the school in 1987. Both events were reported in regional newspapers. Other PNV dignitaries have also visited Lapuebla. This



political alignment, then, may indeed help Lapueblans to counter their "underdog" status of being a smaller, less architecturally beautiful community than Laguardia and other near neighbors.

Basque patriotism and/or economic advantage do not adequately explain why the majority of Lapueblans have supported the PNV. I propose that support of the Basque political party also serves as an expression of pueblo identity and pride for many. It becomes another dimension of pueblo difference. On the other hand, support for the different political parties within the village causes internal divisions. Perhaps this political divisiveness will eventually dilute pueblo identity. Follow-up study will be required to evaluate adequately the integrative and disintegrative effects of political division within villages.

The most "patriotic" supporters of the PNV I spoke to in Lapuebla, in the sense of identifying themselves strongly as Basques, were the local leaders of the PNV. But they even voiced a feeling of needing to regain or re-learn Basque identity. As one local official told me:

What we are trying to do is to recoup the Basque identity. I'm of the Nationalist Party (PNV) and believe we have a culture which we have not been able to take part in, because it was prohibited. Now we try, little by little, to get it back--customs of thousands of years ago. Our zone is more distant from the center of the Basque country because this is the south of the Basque country. It is the frontier with the Rioja of Logroño--no one thought that the question of Basque culture could emerge here. Our zone has

always been Rioja--Rioja included Rioja Alavesa and part of Navarra. It is normal for people to tell you they are Riojanos because the nationalist movement only came here when Franco's repression ended and when people began to be able to speak their ideals.

One means of recovering Basque identity has been the establishment of the pueblo school, which is an "ikastola," wherein pueblo children will learn Euskera and be taught in Euskera. This introduction of Euskera is discussed in the last section of this chapter and in the next chapter. Leaders are also able to affect the public image of the pueblo by promoting the incorporation of Basque elements into pueblo rituals. Many villagers participate in this process.

#### Pueblo Ritual - Medium for Continuity and Change:

Kertzer has defined ritual as "symbolic behavior that is socially standardized and repetitive" (1988:9). In his analysis of the political importance of ritual, Kertzer notes that rituals have "both a conservative bias and innovatory potential" and that people, rather than being slaves to static ritual, help create and transform it (Ibid.:12). Ritual can serve as an agent of sociopolitical change. Such symbolic activity is a way for people to integrate the new through a vehicle which is at the same time both familiar and removed from the ordinary rounds of daily life. Likewise, Smith describes the community festival as "a set of traditional forms for the production and presentation of novelty" (Smith 1975:109).

In addition, ritual functions to bind the group or community, dissolving many of the structured and hierarchical classifications that normally separate people. Turner denotes the result of this leveling process as a state of "communitas"--a temporary sense of group solidarity (Turner 1969). Lisón Tolosana cites pueblo rituals such as baptisms, weddings, funerals and fiestas as rites of village integration in rural Spain: "the ritual expresses and consecrates the values of the group" and reinforces pueblo boundaries of internal/external with neighboring pueblos (1977:83). In Lapuebla, community rituals serve both to bind the community and to introduce novelty.

It could be argued that the premiere ritual of pueblo celebration and integration in Spain is the annual fiesta of each pueblo's patron saint. On my first walk with the cuadrilla of Lapueblan housewives in March, they enthusiastically told me of Lapuebla's fiesta of the patron saint of the pueblo, San Bartolomé, in August. They said if I wanted to understand the life and customs of the village, attendance at this fiesta was essential, and, besides, they noted, it was the most enjoyable time of the year. In my informal survey of village families, I asked which fiesta day of the year was the most important to them, and the majority said the fiesta of San Bartolomé. A few people mentioned Christmas as they considered it an important time for families to gather.

I attended a number of village patron saint's fiestas in Rioja and Rioja Alavesa and found a similar pattern of events during these four to five day celebrations. The fiestas combine both sacred and secular activities and expression. On the main day of each fiesta, the patron saint's day, a special mass is held. The churches are overflowing, and the masses are a central vehicle for celebration of the community. At several saint's day masses I attended, the priests' sermons were full of praise and gratitude for the community. In one village, San Vicente, following the sermon, a congregant spontaneously shouted "viva San Vicente" ("long live St. Vincent"). His exclamation was followed by other enthusiastic "viva's" and loud applause. In another village, after the mass, an older woman told me how these services always make her cry as they evoke nostalgic thoughts of the village and of her friends and family. After the mass, the statue of the patron saint is carried in procession throughout the village, accompanied by the populace, who walk quietly or join in singing chants of praise. The fiesta masses and processions reaffirm the saint's protection and blessing of the village, fostering the temporary dissolution of intrapueblo divisions and the integration of the populace into a state of "communitas" (Turner 1969).

A more rowdy, secular march through the village streets usually inaugurated the beginning of the fiestas on the

first day of the celebrations. In some villages, buckets of water are thrown from upper story windows onto the marchers below. Much laughter accompanies these dousings as people try to dodge the water. One woman commented that this was the "baptism" of the fiesta. A small, local band usually provides musical accompaniment to these lively processions, in which many spontaneously dance.

Other planned activities included daily "encierros" (running of the bulls). This is a more recent innovation to many pueblo fiestas in the Riojas, in imitation of the running of the bulls in the famous Pamplona fiesta of San Fermin. Each morning of the fiesta, young cattle are hired and unleashed to chase the men and teenage boys of the pueblo through the streets. Both sexes and all ages seemed to delight in watching this event each day of the fiesta. Every night, the Ayuntamiento of the pueblo hired a band and people danced in the pueblo plazas until 4:00 or 5:00 a.m. Fireworks, depending on the pueblo's prosperity, were also a nightly attraction in many pueblos. People prided themselves on how little sleep they were able to get by on during the fiesta. One woman told me, "the rest of the year it's the same routine, this week is different--we can sleep after the fiesta."

During the days of the fiestas, local and visiting folk dancers and musicians performed at scheduled appearances. Sporting events, such as handball competitions, were

scheduled. In Lapuebla, as in many of the other pueblos I visited, a committee of young villagers planned and coordinated many of the fiesta events, which were largely financed by the Ayuntamientos. In addition to the planned events, patterned informal activities characterize the Riojan patronal fiestas. Smith notes that while printed fiesta programs announce the officially scheduled events, "innumerable smaller festivals of family and friends" also take place (Smith 1975:58). Families host large meals each night during the fiesta for friends, neighbors and returning relatives. Small troupes of local musicians play in the village streets and square. People gather in the bars and plazas to drink, visit and play cards throughout the days and nights of the fiesta. And, on the last day of many fiestas, pueblo families pack a picnic and meet together to eat and to celebrate somewhere in the fields outside of the village.

Two favorite fiesta meals are las chuletas al sarmiento (small lamb chops grilled over grapevine embers) and la sartenada (a stew of meat, potatoes, seasoning and fresh vegetables of the season, cooked slowly in a large pan (sarten), usually over an open fire). These two dishes, along with patatas con chorizo (potatoes with local, spicy sausage), are three of the most popular regional specialties which all of the Riojas are known for. Another favorite treat associated with the fiestas in all the wine-growing

communities throughout the Riojas is zurrapote, a beverage made of wine, sugar, lemon and cinnamon.

The fiesta is a time of homecoming for villagers who have moved away, and a time for friends from nearby villages to visit. The women prepare the elaborate meals each day, much wine and cognac flows, and family and friends usually end the long meals with the singing of jotas, the tremulous folk songs typical of Rioja, Navarra, and Aragon. The origins of the jota are debated--Greek, Italian, and Arabic influences have been hypothesized. The Spanish jota evolved first in Aragon and Navarra and spread to the Riojas in the eighteenth century. The adaptation of the form to local rhythms and structures contributed to an identifiable Riojan-style jota. The jota is generally a quatrain in which four verses are repeated, with various refrains and verses sometimes added (Aguirre 1986, Alonso Rosaenz 1982). Jotas, anonymously composed, generally express themes of flirtation, love, everyday work, and praise of locale. An example of a Riojan jota is:

No hay patria como la Rioja  
ni cuesta como Toloño  
ni mujeres tan bonitas  
que las que tiene Logroño.

La sangre coge en su vena  
de las cepas de La Rioja  
por eso al ponerse el sol  
el agua del Ebro es roja. (Aguirre 1986:56)

(There is not a homeland like Rioja  
or a hill like Toloño  
nor women as pretty  
as those of Logroño.

The blood partakes in its vein  
 of the vines of La Rioja,  
 and because of this, at sunset,  
 the water of the Ebro is red).

There is also a dance style known as the jota, and the Riojanos have developed a distinct "Riojan" version of the dance.

In Rioja and Rioja Alavesa, where pueblos are spaced two to five kilometers apart, the patronal fiestas also serve to reinforce the boundaries between pueblos, since people from neighboring pueblos usually attend each others' patronal fiestas (Freeman 1979). Thus, the fiesta is a time to recognize the other and to evoke village nicknames, jokes, and stereotypes in good-natured teasing. For example, at one family's fiesta dinner in Lapuebla, attended by friends from Laguardia, I was asked by the host in which village I had heard women using the most tacos (swear words). I attempted diplomacy by saying that since I had spent more time in Lapuebla, I had naturally listened to more people there and heard more tacos. The man replied proudly, "yes, that's right, our women are more earthy here --we are not as elegant and cultured as our friends from Laguardia." Many villagers assured me that their patronal fiesta was the best fiesta, not to be compared to those of the neighboring pueblos, which were often described as sosas (dull, uninteresting).

In their joyful and energetic creation of, and participation in, the formal and informal rituals of the



patronal fiesta, inhabitants display their best selves to visitors and returning migrants. The annual event reinforces the belief that the pueblo is a good place to live, and a good place to be from. In addition to celebrating pueblo bonds, ritual such as the patronal fiesta can also be a vehicle for the introduction of new elements into pueblo culture (Kertzer 1988, Smith 1975).

During Lapuebla's patronal fiesta of San Bartolomé in August of 1987, symbolic Basque elements were incorporated into the routinized patterns of the pueblo fiesta. For example, the Ayuntamiento arranged a performance by a Basque stone lifter. Competitive lifting of huge boulders is a folk sport which originated in the mountainous zones of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. A large audience of Lapueblans watched the muscular man from Bilbao perform the seemingly impossible feat of lifting the gigantic boulder onto his shoulders. A "master of ceremonies" accompanied the stone lifter, and encouraged spectators to count, in Euskera, the number of seconds the stone was held. Following this performance, Lapueblan men were instructed by the men from Bilbao in the soka-tira (tug of war), a sport typical of Guipúzcoan villages, as discussed in Chapter Five.

Pelota (handball) matches are scheduled during the fiesta and are well attended. This sport, although associated with Basques, is a favorite game of boys and men throughout the Riojas and in other areas of the country.

Variations of handball were played by the Greeks, Romans and ancient Egyptians. Since at least the sixteenth century, Basques have been known for their innovations and expertise in the game. They developed several styles and variations of pelota over time, incorporating the use of gloves, paddles, and baskets to increase speed in some versions. Jai Alai, Basque words meaning "merry festival," is the name of the version of the game developed to use the cesta, or wicker basket (Gallop 1980:230-250).

The handball version of the game requires little equipment, and can be played against church or other existing walls, making the sport accessible to poor people. The construction of the elaborate pelota fronton in Lapuebla is representative of the village's support of this Basque-associated sport, although the game was already a favorite recreational activity in the village prior to Rioja Alavesa's incorporation into the Basque Country. Some Lapueblans, and some neighboring villagers, said the fronton was too large and too expensive for Lapuebla, and that monies should have been used to build other recreational facilities such as basketball and tennis courts, in addition to a less elaborate pelota fronton.

As mentioned in Chapter Five, folk dance and musical groups from the northern provinces performed during the Lapuebla fiesta--Lapueblans were spectators. The

introduction of these performances to the fiesta schedule did not replace Lapueblans' participation in the singing and dancing of their own jotas. But Lapuebla did not have an organized dance troupe on the scale of the dance clubs of Elciego and Laguardia. In Elciego, for example, a village folk dance group was organized in the 1940s to maintain village dances, and continues today (Fernández Ibañez 1983:272). There are about twenty-one to twenty-two members of the group, mostly teenagers, and mostly girls--there are eight boys. They learned the dances from the group which preceded them and are teaching them to younger children. Several dancers are children of village migrants who return to Elciego on weekends. Participation in the dance group by these second generation migrants perpetuates their identity with the pueblo.

The group is a member of the Federation of Folk Dancers of Alava and as such, they travel to perform in other parts of Alava and the Basque Country. In 1987, Elciego's dance club hosted the federation's annual meeting, and groups from all over the Basque Country came to perform in the village. In this way, Elciego is both preserving its village traditions while being integrated into the Basque region through the dance federation. This integration into the larger Basque community is not at the expense of local custom, but rather, incorporates local custom as a

recognized part of Basque tradition, and encourages the maintenance of pueblo identity.

During the patronal fiestas, the pueblo dance groups perform the important function of accompanying the religious procession of the patron saint with a dance called the pasacalles. Lapuebla did not have an established dance club of the caliber of its neighbors. This may have been a motivating factor for Lapuebla's more frequent importation of performers from the north for festival events.

Also, many Lapueblans dressed their children in costumes associated with the northern Basque provinces. Little boys sported the large-sized boinas (berets), flounced knickers, knee socks, laced sandals and smock jackets more typical of the northern Basque provinces. Little girls were outfitted in long gingham dresses, aprons, shawls and head scarves, a costume also associated with the north. Older teenage girls wore plain navy blue skirts and shirts, which they told me were "Basque" outfits. I was quite surprised to see some of the children of the most ardent supporters of the AP political party, detractors of the pueblos' PNV leaders, dressed in these costumes. Although appearing to be a superficial concession to fashion, these Basque costumes serve as a symbolic marker of a Basque identity to outsiders.

In addition, the cover page of the annual fiesta program featured children in these costumes and the mayor's

salutation in the program was written in both Castilian and Euskera. The mayor did not speak Euskera. Only children who have been studying the language in school and visitors and migrants from the northern provinces are fluent in Euskera in Lapuebla. The Basque elements in the fiesta program are another emblem to both Lapueblans and to outsiders that Lapuebla is part of the Basque Country. The 1987 fiesta programs of Elciego and Laguardia did not show evidence of "Basque" influence. When I attended the patronal fiesta in Laguardia, the formal and informal fiesta patterns were the same as they were in Lapuebla, but no Basque elements were evident. The Basque symbols in the Lapuebla fiesta add a new dimension of differentiation between the two villages.

Basque elements were incorporated into pueblo ritual in Lapuebla on occasions other than the patronal fiesta. In 1987, for example, the annual "Día del Gracias" (Day of Thanksgiving) celebrating the end the grape harvest on the last Sunday in October, was transformed into an inauguration ceremony for the newly completed village school. Normally, a thanksgiving mass is said; the patron saint, laden with grapes, is taken on procession around the village; and families prepare elaborate fiesta meals. In 1987, the thanksgiving mass was given by a priest from San Sebastián, who said the mass in both Spanish and Euskera, alternating the languages. After the traditional procession, the entire

population walked to the new school, where the president of the autonomous Basque community gave the opening speech, in both languages, and praised the people of Lapuebla for planting the seeds for recovering Euskera by building the ikastola. The speech, discussed in more detail in the next chapter, was followed by an open house reception at the school, with food provided by the Ayuntamiento. A performance by a folk dance group from Guipúzcoa followed the open house. By planning the school opening to coincide with the village's annual day of thanksgiving, the pueblo ritual became a vehicle to inaugurate the new school where the children would learn and study in Euskera. This event was also reported in the local newspapers, which reinforces the public image of Lapuebla as Basque, or as supporting the recuperation of Basque identity, to a wider audience.

Although I was not in Lapuebla for Christmas, several villagers told me of a recent "Basque" addition to their celebrations. Throughout most of Spain, including Lapuebla, children receive gifts from "the three Wise Men" on January 6 (El Día de Los Reyes - "the day of the Kings," when the wise men brought gifts to the infant Jesus). Since about 1984, a young man of Lapuebla told me he has dressed up as the Basque "Olentzero" to distribute presents to village children on Christmas Eve. The Christmas Eve appearance of the Olentzero is a tradition which originated in the Bidasoa zone of Guipúzcoa. The Olentzero is a living man or a dummy

dressed up like a miner, with blackened face, carrying a bag of coal and a bota (wineskin). Traditionally, the Olentzero sits on a platform which is carried through the community by local men and boys who stop at street corners to sing special verses about their gluttonous and wine-loving Olentzero. The carolers also solicit contributions of food, etc. for their group (Feliu Corcuera 1987(4):245-254).

The origins of the tradition, and the etiology of the name Olentzero, are obscure, although the practice may have some connection to pre-Christian Winter Solstice rituals of the zone (Caro Baroja 1973:101-128). The custom has spread from its area of origin in recent decades and has been transformed into a type of Santa Claus or Papa Noel in some places (such as in Lapuebla). Feliu Corcuera concludes that the use of the Olentzero as a form of Santa Claus is a corruption of the more original traditions, as described above, which are still practiced in parts of Guipúzcoa and northern Navarra (1987(4):247).

Although Lapueblans interpret the Olentzero as a Santa Claus figure, and do not share in the traditions of the procession and singing which accompany the Olentzero in some northern Basque areas, Lapueblans perceive the Olentzero as a Basque Christmas tradition. The Olentzero does not replace the Día de Los Reyes in Lapuebla, but is being adopted as another part of Christmas celebrations in the village.

The above examples of the incorporation of Basque elements into Lapuebla's rituals are evidence of the ritual's capacity to introduce cultural innovations. Although children's costumes, stone lifting, folk dances, and the Olentzero are symbolic markers displayed only on ceremonial occasions, they nonetheless serve to demarcate Lapuebla as a village which identifies more as Basque than villages where Basque markers have not been incorporated into pueblo ritual. The incorporation of these markers also reinforces the association of Basque identity with the customs of the north. Beyond such symbolic demonstrations, Lapuebla has established an ikastola, a school where village children will be taught the majority of their subjects in Euskera. This commitment to Basque language learning also demarcates Lapuebla as "pro-Basque."

#### Pueblo Identity and the Ikastola

Since language serves as a primary marker of Basque identity, the next chapter is devoted to an examination of the introduction of Euskera to Rioja Alavesa. The construction of the ikastola in Lapuebla was not motivated solely by villagers' interest in their children learning Euskera. The new school is an imposing building villagers can boast of, and it also provides the opportunity for children to remain in the village to study. Previously, facilities in Lapuebla only served children to age ten, after which they had to bus to the national school in



Laguardia. Keeping the children in the village, with increased parental interaction with teachers, is viewed as beneficial to the community by many. One young Lapueblan mother of four commented, "It's a good idea for the children to learn Euskera. We wanted our children to stay here, instead of going out of town." This comment represents the mixed motivations of many parents in Lapuebla. Most think learning Euskera will provide a practical advantage to their children in finding jobs in the Basque Country, but they also view the establishment of the school as enabling the children to remain in the pueblo longer, fostering identity with the pueblo. The mayor of Lapuebla expressed this view:

One of the problems in this village is the lack of community spirit in our young. With this new system of education we are changing this. Before, the children got on the bus and stayed all day in Laguardia, and the parents had little to no contact with the teachers. Now, the children can remain in the pueblo and this is good because a pueblo without children is practically dead.

The mixed motivations of Lapueblans' support for the new ikastola indicate a far from simple correlation of the building of the ikastola with a desire to promote a Basque identity in the village. Also, although the majority of Lapueblan children attend the new ikastola, fourteen children still travel to the national school in Laguardia each day. Several teenagers attend trade schools in Logroño. Parents have the option to enroll their children in the ikastola, where all subjects except Spanish and mathematics are taught in Euskera, or in a national school,

where Euskera is taught only as a separate language course. That several Lapueblan parents prefer to send their children to the national school in Laguardia indicates lack of unanimous parental support for the ikastola and for bilingual education in Lapuebla. But Lapuebla is viewed by neighboring villagers as more "Basque" because the PNV leads the village government and because the ikastola has been established. Laguardia, on the other hand, is perceived as less Basque because of the composition of the village government and because its bilingual school is not called an ikastola and is attended by only a minority of Laguardia's children.

These findings parallel Sahlin's (1989) conclusions that local communities may exhibit "contextual and differential affirmation" of a national, or, in this case, an ethnic national identity, without necessarily diluting local identity. I contend that Lapueblans' general support for Basque political parties and language policies is partly motivated by their ambition to represent the pueblo as a proud and successful community among the larger, "más elegante" neighboring pueblos. In this case, the endorsement of an ethnic national identity is intimately related to expressions of pueblo identity.

I focused on Lapuebla and Laguardia because they provide examples of different pueblo-level receptions to Rioja Alavesa's incorporation into the Basque Country.

Community-level analysis would need to be carried out in each of the villages of Rioja Alavesa in order to relate pueblo identity to Basque identity in each case. The majority of the municipal governments in Rioja Alavesa were led by the PNV in 1987, but, based on data from Lapuebla, support of a Basque political party does not necessarily indicate unambiguous support for Basque nationalism or for identification as Basque. Likewise, although ikastolas were established in seven villages in Rioja Alavesa, support for the schools springs from a variety of reasons, such as parents' aspirations for decentralization of the school system.

An overview of the Basque government's language policies, and the effects of these policies in Rioja Alavesa, will provide further insight into the processes of identity change in the zone. Language is the "context" of identity subject to the most direct and deliberate efforts to inculcate Basque sentiment in Rioja Alavesa. Language policies were a topic of much debate in the zone during 1987. Language may be the identity marker most indicative of change in Rioja Alavesa, and with the most potential for affecting the ethnic identity of succeeding generations.

CHAPTER 8  
LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY: EUSKERA IN RIOJA ALAVESA

Language policies and planning strategies which have facilitated the introduction of Euskera to Rioja Alavesa since the late 1970s raise questions about the relationship of language and identity and the feasibility of language revival as a means of fostering ethnic solidarity. At the conclusion of the last chapter, I noted that many people in the village of Lapuebla viewed the new ikastola as a source of village pride and as a way to keep village children from having to commute to Laguardia for school. These factors, along with the perception that knowledge of Euskera improved job opportunities in the Basque Country, were more prevalent motivations for parental support of the ikastola than a strong commitment to the revival of the Basque language. Euskera is promoted as a fundamental marker of Basque identity by ethnic leaders, but, as this chapter will illustrate, it is being reinterpreted at the local level in Rioja Alavesa.

Edwards (1985), González Blasco (1974), Linz (1975) and Eastman (1979) warn those who would study ethnic movements to be aware of this potential divergence between motivations and beliefs of ethnic leaders in formulating programs of

cultural and linguistic revival, and the motivations and beliefs of the beneficiaries of these programs. To clarify this and other issues emanating from the introduction of Euskera to Rioja Alavesa, this chapter is divided into several sections. A general discussion of the relationship of language and identity and language and nationalism is first needed as a foundation for the analysis of this specific case. The history of Euskera in Rioja Alavesa will be reviewed, as well as the evolution of governmental language policies towards Euskera. In the remainder of the chapter, I will describe the processes of linguistic change I observed in Rioja Alavesa during the "moment in time" of my fieldwork period.

#### Language, Identity, and Ethnic Nationalism

Two basic questions this case raises are whether and when language planning should be used as a means of fostering ethnic pride and solidarity. Scholars are divided on these issues. Eastman (1979) concludes that the answer may depend on whether or not the language is still spoken by the group as they move towards ethnic nation status. Both cases exist in the Basque Country--Euskera is spoken by approximately 600,000 Basques in Spain, but language planning strategies to promote Euskera learning also affect monolingual zones such as Rioja Alavesa, where Euskera is not a part of the existing speech community.

Wardhaugh (1987), Edwards (1985) and Petersen (1975) note that the association of language loyalty with national identity is recent:

In the pre-19th century world languages diffused and contracted as empires expanded or fell, or religious systems flourished or declined, or mercantile patterns changed. There was little direct management of language affairs by states and empires. . . . It was only with the rise of nationalism in the late 18th century that language became symbolic of nationality and could be used as a focus for political and cultural struggle. It could also at the same time be used to expand a state's power both within and without and to resist similar expansionist policies of other states. Language diffusion could be managed and because it could be, it was. (Wardhaugh 1987:4)

The growth of the idea of nationalism as an organizing principle for political entities in Europe during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was discussed in Chapter Two. Language came to be seen as an important basis for nationhood. One of the early exponents of this idea was the German, Johann Gottfried Herder, who, in 1772, made one of the first influential statements equating language with national feeling:

Has a nationality anything dearer than the speech of its fathers? In its speech resides its whole thought domain, its tradition, history, religion and basis of life, all its heart and soul. To deprive a people of its speech is to deprive it of its one eternal good (Herder in Wardhaugh 1987:54).

The idea that "a people" are naturally entitled to some form of autonomous political status based on a shared culture, language, and values, is a basis for contemporary ethnic nationalist movements in Europe and elsewhere.

Language planning has been used to foster ethnic nationalist sentiment by the leaders of many ethnic movements, but the wide variation in the character and scope of such movements makes comparative analysis difficult (Williams 1984). For example, Scottish Gaelic is the first language of native inhabitants of the Western Isles of Scotland. Children learn English from the media and in school and islanders are bilingual. Gaelic had been mostly denigrated or ignored by the English-oriented school system, and islanders thought that perfecting English was necessary to get ahead in the world. But new island leaders were implementing language planning to promote bilingual education and pride in Gaelic during my 1981 fieldwork in the Western Isles. Since Gaelic is an integral part of island culture and daily life, I viewed the language planning efforts of local leaders as positive actions to maintain and foster an existing island tradition, as did most (but not all) islanders. In contrast, research in Rioja Alavesa has left me skeptical about the efficacy and effects of language planning which attempts to "revive" Euskera in communities where it has not been used for centuries. The differences in these cases caution against simple or pat answers to the questions of whether and when language planning should be used as a means of fostering ethnic pride and solidarity.

Some scholars have advocated the revival of minority languages even in areas where the language is no longer spoken. For example, although only approximately one fifth of the population of Wales speaks Welsh, Khleif says the learning of Welsh is a "rejection of the colonized self" (1980:266). He concludes that the Welsh language is one of the few authentic Welsh features to survive centuries of subjugation to the English:

the quest for authenticity is pushing groups to claim language as an index of uniqueness, especially if the language has been a suppressed one, a casualty of 'internal colonialism.' (Khleif 1980:272)

Some would use similar arguments for teaching Euskera in Rioja Alavesa, depicting the zone as part of the Basque Country most subject to the cultural and political domination of Spain. Learning Euskera, then, could be viewed as a way for these people to reconnect with a sense of Basqueness, a way to distinguish themselves from the Spanish.

In reviewing the ethnic separatist movements of the French Canadians, the Welsh and the Spanish Basques, Williams (1984) supports ethnic leaders' use of minority language as a means of promoting ethnic sentiment and loyalty in each of the above cases. He is optimistic about the results of language planning in these areas:

Language is a means of mediating between the past and the present, it is the repository of a group's collective identity, rooted in a national territory. (1984:215)



Although Williams mentions that the migrants from other areas of Spain who live in the Basque Country pose a problem for language planners, he does not question whether all the native-born inhabitants of the Basque provinces share equally in a perception of Euskera as a repository of the group's collective identity.

Edwards (1985) and Paulston (1988) are less optimistic about the language planning efforts of ethnic leaders. Paulston says that ethnic leaders' tendency to portray an isomorphic relationship between language and culture is inaccurate. For example, she notes, the Spanish language is the carrier of many cultures. She also cites cases, such as Chicanos in Los Angeles, and some Amerindian groups, where ethnic and cultural distinction have been maintained although the group's native language has not survived. Paulston states that economic advantage and social prestige are two major reasons for language shift:

jobs determine language learning strategies which is to say wherever there are jobs available that demand knowledge of a certain language, people will learn it. Without rewards, language learning is not salient. (Paulston 1988:4-5)

Both Paulston and Edwards distinguish communicative and symbolic functions of language. They are not referring to the basic definition of human language as a system of symbols used for communication, but, of the function an entire language can fulfill as the symbol, or emblem, of a people: "The basic distinction here is between language in

its ordinarily understood sense as a tool of communication, and language as an emblem of groupness, as a symbol, a rallying-point" (Edwards 1985:17). Language, these authors contend, may become a symbol, in the sense of an emblem, of a group's identity without necessarily being the group's mother tongue, or a means of communication. Edwards cites the results of a 1975 survey done by the Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research as an example of separability of symbolic and communicative functions of a language. Most of the three thousand respondents in this survey endorsed the value of Irish Gaelic as a an important part of Irish identity but said they were pessimistic about its future as a means of communication (Edwards 1985:18).

Paulston and Edwards adhere to the view of ethnicity as a subjective sense of groupness in which the presence of any particular identity marker, such as language, is not essential. The repertoire of traits used to distinguish a group vary situationally and historically. Evidence from Rioja Alavesa supports this interpretation--the ideology of what it means to be Basque has emphasized different markers through its historical evolution. The Basque language is a unique tradition of many Basques, but the efficacy of Euskera as a primary marker of Basque identity in zones such as Rioja Alavesa is debatable.

Edwards (1984) posits that language revival efforts which attempt to introduce a language to an existing speech community may be artificial in two ways:

They are artificial, first of all, in that they are divorced from the forces of day-to-day reality for the mass of the population. It is simply not possible to bring about widespread language shift when the appeal is made on the basis of abstractions like culture, heritage or tradition; these are not, of course, trivial or ignoble aspects of life but they are not conscious priorities of most people. Revivalism is often artificial, as well, in the type of language form it attempts to resuscitate. From a desire to standardize, to upgrade, to give fair play to a number of dialects, an academic variety may be produced which is some way removed from the maternal speech patterns of any native speakers. (Edwards 1984:288)

Both of these criticisms have been made regarding the teaching of Euskera as a primary means of fostering Basque identity (Linz 1975, Clark 1981). But in spite of the fact that Euskera has not been a part of day-to-day reality for inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa in many centuries, many parents are anxious for their children to learn the language. Also, Euskera is taking on increasing importance as an emblem of Basque identity for people who will never use the language as a means of communication. Although parents' motivations for supporting language education policies may be different from those of ethnic leaders, children who learn the language may think of it as an integral element of their identification as Basques. If, in two generations, most inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa are bilingual, the teaching of the language in the schools will not be deemed "artificial."

The linguistic link is one ethnic leaders hope to use

in establishing a basis for the common ancestry of Rioja Alaveses and other Basques, since some form of Euskera was spoken in the zone at least during part of the Middle Ages, and possibly in prehistoric times. As discussed in Chapter Five, this linguistic heritage is interpreted differently by those who support a Basque identity for Rioja Alaveses, and by those who promote a "Riojan" identity for the autonomous community of Rioja.

#### Euskera and Its History in Rioja Alaveses

Euskera is assumed to be a language of great antiquity. Some medieval scholars held that Euskera was the language of Noah's grandson, Tubal, who took it to Iberia where it was spoken throughout the peninsula at the time. Although this theory has been discarded, modern scholarship has shown that Euskera is indeed a very old language. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, it was discovered that many European and Asian languages came from a common source and were given the name "Indo-European." The Basque language did not fit into this language family, and philologists concluded that Euskera predates the migrations from the East which brought the Indo-European languages to Europe about three thousand years ago. Linguists have found that Euskera shows some structural similarities with various languages of the Caucasus mountains of Georgia, as well as with some of the Hamitosemitic languages of North Africa, especially Berber.

But evidence for Euskera's relationship to other languages is inconclusive (Heiberg 1989:13).

The antiquity and uniqueness of the language is used to support claims that the Basques have inhabited their territory since time immemorial. For example, a publication of the autonomous Basque government aimed at explaining the history of Euskera to foreigners, published in English, French, German and Spanish, states:

Basque, one of the most primitive of European languages, dating back to before the Indo-European invasion, is still alive in the streets, valleys and mountains of the Basque Country. The Basques feel that they are members of an ancient society and feel a great affection towards the Basque language. Our ancestor, Cro-Magnon man, lived in the caves which are found here, and with evolution developed the unique characteristics of modern-day Basques. (HABE 1987:9)

This booklet is an example of an interpretation of history, and pre-history, which presents to visitors an image of the Basque people as sharing a common ancestry, and common values of affection for, and loyalty to, their ancient Basque language. The diversity of peoples who inhabit the Basque Country is de-emphasized in such interpretations.

It was noted in Chapter Five that scholars such as Palacios (1978), who support a Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa, claim that the area originally shared in Basque culture, values, and language, but that these were eroded and corrupted by the various peoples who have influenced the zone. This interpretation promotes the idea that it is possible to revive and rekindle ancestral Basque features in

the zone--and language becomes a primary mechanism for accomplishing this goal. In an attitude survey regarding Euskera carried out by the Cabinet of Sociological Investigations of the Basque regional government, the authors state:

Language, like the flag, the race or the creed, is easily transformed into the nucleus of cohesion, into the mechanism of social integration in the group which uses or knows it. It rapidly confers an emotional intensity and symbolic content of the first magnitude. . . . Language is the most capable and powerful recourse for the construction of frontiers, social as well as political. (Ruiz Olabuénaga et al. 1983:11)

But these same authors also recognize the difficulty of using Euskera as a symbol for all of the Basque Country:

One of the most notable structural weaknesses of Euskera is that it does not correspond to the historical limits of the Basque People (if these can be delimited), or to the political administrative limits of the actual autonomous Basque Community. (Ibid.:121)

As noted in Chapter Three, it is debated whether Euskera had been spoken in Rioja Alavesa in prehistoric times, or whether it was introduced by northern migrants following the Reconquest of the zone by Christian forces (Merino Urrutia 1975, Echenique Elizondo 1987). In addition to medieval church and government documents attesting to the presence of Euskera in the Riojas, the toponymy in some zones, "down to the names of the hills, the fountains, the valleys and other small landmarks," still retain Basque names (González de Herrero 1977:149). The greatest number of surviving Basque toponyms are found in the Valley of Ojacastro in the western portion of the autonomous community

of Rioja. For example, the majority of tributaries of the River Oja have Basque names: Ayaberrena, Altuzarra, Cilbarena, Turza, Bazaiza, Artaso, Arbiza (Merino Urrutia 1978:14).

Some scholars (Merino Urrutia 1978, Tovar 1959, Caro Baroja 1971) think that many of these toponyms date from prehistoric Euskera-speaking tribes who inhabited the area, while others (Echenique Elizondo 1987, González de Herrero 1977) believe they date only from the post-Reconquest migrations of northern Euskera speakers to the Riojas. The majority of the surviving toponyms are located in the contemporary autonomous community of Rioja, in the Ojacastró river valley. Far fewer Basque toponyms are extant in the Ebro plain, including Rioja Alavesa. Merino Urrutia credits this discrepancy to the earlier influence of Castilian in the plain as compared to the more isolated mountain river valley of Ojacastró (1978:14).

As discussed in Chapter Three, the Navarrese king, Sancho Garcés I, in alliance with the Leonese king Ordoño II, were the first Christians to win Riojan territory south of the Ebro from the Moors. Sancho Garcés established an administrative center in Najera. The Navarrese dynasty was of Basque ancestry, and Euskera was probably spoken in much of the Kingdom of Navarra. Some dialect of Euskera was spoken on both sides of the Ebro in medieval times, but Basques were not the only inhabitants of the zone, nor

Euskera the sole language. Castilian and Arabic were also used, and Latin was the language of the church and of government documents. As noted in Chapter Five, the first written words in both Castilian and in Euskera were found in the marginal notes of a tenth century monk of the Riojan monastery of San Millan, indicating the monk was bilingual. Such evidence of Euskera use in the Riojas is being used to promote the teaching of Euskera in Rioja Alavesa today, but it is de-emphasized in interpretations which try to foster a unique Riojan identity for the autonomous community of Rioja, distinct from neighboring Basques.

As Castile became the most powerful kingdom in medieval Spain, and led the formation of the Spanish state after 1492, Castilian was increasingly used in government and commerce. With the expanding power and influence of Castile and Castilian, Euskera receded from the Riojas beginning in the thirteenth century. Through time, Castilian came to have an increasing influence in the developing urban areas throughout the Basque provinces. By the later nineteenth century, industrialization, urbanization, incoming migrants, and the predominance of Castilian in business, commerce and government contributed to the recession of Euskera to more rural areas in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. Euskera became the language of home and farm, while Castilian evolved as the language needed to succeed in the cities. Heiberg describes how Castilian was



viewed as the prestige language, associated with wealth and sophistication, even to many of the Euskera-speaking rural Basques of the Guipúzcoan village where she did research (1989:179). As noted in Chapter Three, Sabino de Arana y Goiri, founder of the Basque Nationalist Party in Bilbao in 1894, had to learn Euskera as an adult. The fact that he and the co-founders of the party named it El Partido Nacionalista Vasco rather than a Basque name is indication of the predominance Castilian had gained in Basque cities (Heiberg 1975:181).

Today, the uneven distribution of the Euskera-speaking population attests to the historical patterns of shift to Castilian. In a survey carried out in the early 1970s, Yzizar estimated that 44% of the population of Guipúzcoa speak Euskera, 13% in Vizcaya, 7.7% in Navarra and only .91% in Alava (Yzizar in Clark:1981). Siguan, in a survey completed in 1982, estimated 45% of the population of Guipúzcoa speak Euskera, 15% in Vizcaya, 11% in Navarra and 8% in Alava. In the 1981 government census, 57% of the population declared knowledge of Euskera in Guipúzcoa, 28% in Vizcaya and 13% in Alava (Ruiz Olabuénaga et al. 1983). The census data were obtained by personal declaration, not through a language examination. Some individuals may have declared an intent or wish to learn Euskera rather than actual proficiency in it (Ibid.:26). It is also relevant that Yzizar did his survey during the Franco regime. The

post-Franco political climate allowing freedom of linguistic expression might have allowed for some of the increases in reported knowledge of Euskera between the time of Yzizar's survey and the 1981 census, especially in Alava.

For a population of about 2.6 million in the four Spanish Basque provinces, estimates of the total number who know Euskera range from 500,000 (Clark 1981) to 700,000 (1981 Census). Ruiz Olabuénaga et al. believe the 1981 census results may be too optimistic and that about 25-27% of the population may be a more accurate estimate of the proportion of the population of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, Alava and Navarra who speak Euskera (Ruiz Olabuénaga et al. 1983:25). Siguan agrees with the 25% estimate (Siguan 1988).

Apart from the uneven geographical distribution of Euskera speakers, this population is concentrated in small towns and villages. Not one town with a population of over 20,000 had a rate of over 50% who could speak Euskera, and major cities had some of the lowest rates (Clark 1981:93). This rural/urban dichotomy reflects the fact that most migrants from other parts of Spain settled in the Basque cities, and also, that Castilian was the language of business and commerce in the urban areas. In addition, Franco's repressive policies towards Euskera may have been less easily enforced in rural areas.

State Linguistic Policies and the Survival of Euskera:

To much of the outside world, Spain is not seen as a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual country because the majority language, Spanish, or Castilian, is also a major global language, viewed as originating in Spain (Pi-Sunyer 1985:256). But Linz notes that "outside the USSR, it {Spain} is the largest multi-lingual country in Europe and the oldest multi-lingual state in Europe" (Linz 1975:367). Most people in Spain do speak Spanish, but many also speak one of the regional languages. Although approximations vary, it is estimated that of Spain's population of thirty seven million, there are six million speakers of Catalan, three million speakers of Galician, and a little more than half a million speakers of Euskera; nearly all of whom are also fluent in Spanish. But since the fifteenth century, Castilian became the official language of the developing Spanish state and little to no official recognition was given to the other languages of Spain (Wardhaugh 1987:119-120).

Franco's proscription of Spain's regional language was harsh, but not new, as Wardhaugh notes:

From the eighteenth century on a succession of Spanish governments had severely restricted the use of the other languages of Spain, forbidding their use in education, administration, and public life, and severely curtailing what was written in them and their use in religious worship (Wardhaugh 1987:120).

For example, with the revocation of the Basque fueros following the second defeat of the Carlists in 1876, the

victorious Liberals placed restrictions on the use of the Basque language (Heiberg 1989). By the later nineteenth century, however, the nationalist movements in both Catalonia and the Basque Country succeeded in influencing the development of linguistic societies, publications and language revival efforts in both regional languages.

Under the Primo De Rivera dictatorship (1923-1930), the regional languages were again actively suppressed--publishing in the languages was strictly limited and the use of the languages on signs and in advertising outlawed. The 1931 Constitution of the Second Spanish Republic declared Castilian the official language of the Republic, but allowed for some teaching in the regional languages once autonomy statutes for Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country were approved. The Statute of Autonomy for Catalonia, enacted in 1932, recognized Catalan as the co-official language of Catalonia. Castilian still had to be taught in the schools of Catalonia, but Catalan could also be taught. Since the Basque autonomy statute was only passed after the start of the Civil War in 1936, the Basque government was in control of regional language policy only a short time before the occupation by Franco's forces. Galicia's Statute of Autonomy was not enacted (Linz 1975:413-415).

The Franco regime exalted national unity and suppressed the use of languages other than Spanish (Siguan 1988:451). Williams (1984) terms Franco's policies towards Euskera

"linguistic genocide." Franco perceived Basque culture and language to be catalysts of Basque nationalism and therefore, threats to his centrist regime. Suppression of the language began soon after the occupation. After the fall of Bilbao, the Basque university created there a year earlier by the Basque Statute of Autonomy of 1936 was closed. All public and private use of the language was prohibited, even casual street conversations. Basque cultural societies and their publications were proscribed--there was a mass burning of books in Euskera. The use of the language was banned in all religious publications, as well as in religious ceremonies. All Basque names in civil registries and other official documents had to be translated into Spanish. Children could not be baptized with Basque names, and all inscriptions in Euskera were ordered removed from tombstones, funeral markers and public buildings. The teaching of Euskera in either public or private schools was prohibited (Clark 1981:93). One response of Basques to this oppression was the establishment, beginning in the early 1960s, of the clandestine "ikastolas," schools for teaching Euskera to the next generation.

By the late 1950s, the Spanish government realized the impossibility or the inadvisability of trying to eliminate Euskera completely, and instead focused on regulating its use. Proscriptions were relaxed. In 1955, a Chair of Basque studies was permitted at the University of Salamanca.

Basque language and scholarly academies were allowed to reopen, and the strict limits on the use of Basque in church services was loosened. Vatican II's decision to permit the use of vernacular languages in the celebration of Mass expedited the use of Euskera in the mass. Euskera was permitted on some radio stations and Basque folkloric dance and instrumental groups could perform. By 1968, the Law of General Education authorized the teaching of regional languages at the primary level, thus legalizing the ikastolas (Clark 1981:94,95).

Following Franco's death and the establishment of democratic government, a new Spanish Constitution was completed in 1978. Regarding language, the Constitution states that the regional languages of Spain must be preserved and encouraged for the common good, while Castilian remains the official language of the country. The Spanish Ministry of Education passed a Decree on Bilingualism in 1979. It requires that in regions with their own language, all levels and grades of Basic General Education (Ensenanza General Basica - children aged 6 - 14), should include at least three hours of instruction per week in the regional language. The decree allowed for the increase of the minimum requirement at the request of individual schools (Siguan 1988:452).

The Statute of Autonomy for the autonomous Basque community was enacted in 1979 and the autonomous Basque

government passed a Law for the Normalization of Euskera in 1982, to promote its use in public and private life (Siguan 1988). The preface to this law states: "Euskera is recognized as the most visible and objective symbol of identity of our community and is an instrument for full integration of the individual into the community through his knowledge and use of it" (Ley de Normalizacion 1982). The law provides for the use of Euskera in all government and judicial transactions if citizens so prefer, for the publication of government documents in both languages, for bilingual public signs, for the promotion of Euskera in the arts and media, and for the teaching of Euskera in public schools (Ibid.).

In Spain, the public schools are now administered by the regional governments and funded by central and regional governments. Many private schools are run by the Catholic Church; others are non-confessional, for-profit organizations. Children begin school at age six and are required by law to attend until age sixteen. At fourteen, children choose between college preparatory or vocational curricula, and graduate at eighteen or nineteen from these programs. In the Basque Country, the ikastolas, or Basque language schools, must be added to the typology of schools.

The Basque government has specified three types or models of schools children may attend to allow for some flexibility in the requirement that all children study

Euskera in the public schools. Since the letter "C" does not exist in Euskeran orthography, the types are designated "A," "B," and "D." In model A schools, Euskera is studied only as a language course, with other courses conducted in Castilian; in model B schools, a bilingual curriculum is offered, with courses in both languages; and in model D schools, Castilian is only taught as a language course, with all other courses in Euskera. Model D schools are mostly private ikastolas, although some receive funding from the regional government. In 1983, the Basque Parliament passed a law establishing a federation of ikastolas (EIKE - Euskal Ikastolen Erakundea - Basque Institute of Ikastolas) to set guidelines for all new ikastolas built with government funds. Existing ikastolas could join, receive subsidies, and adhere to the federation's guidelines; or remain independent (Urla 1987:338).

The ikastolas originated under marginal conditions. In Guipúzcoa in the early 1960s, concerned Basque parents and community leaders began establishing these clandestine centers for teaching Euskera in homes and churches. The centers were either persecuted or ignored by officials. The teaching and speaking of Euskera represented an anti-Franco, pro-Basque stance. The politicization of the Basque language was intensified in reaction to Franco's manipulation and oppression of Basque language and culture. Urla comments, "Being Basque, speaking Basque, became an



oppositional practice, a symbolic act of resistance against the Spanish state" (Urla 1987:102). The ikastola movement has grown and changed since the first secretive meetings. "The ikastola , at the end of the 1970s, represents a social movement of great scope with an extraordinary significance in the cultural codification of the collective identity" (Arpal et al. 1984:49).

The rapid growth of the ikastolas since the 1970s has caused some problems. Initially, there was only a small number of teachers capable of teaching Euskera or in Euskera. Pedagogical problems resulted from the original method of instruction in the ikastolas, the "immersion" method where the only language of instruction was Euskera. The acquisition of Euskera proved to be less rapid and thorough than anticipated. Some ikastolas retain this teaching method (model "D" schools), mostly for children for whom Euskera is the first language. However, for pedagogical reasons and to receive more government funding, other ikastolas have chosen to provide a gradual introduction of Euskera to Spanish-speaking children, resulting in bilingual education (model "B" schools). It was only after the establishment of the autonomous Basque government that teacher training courses for teaching Euskera began. The three public teachers colleges in the Basque provinces ensure teachers' competence in Euskera (Siguan 1988).

The early ikastolas also suffered from a paucity of textbooks and other teaching materials in Euskera. But in the few years since the Basques gained autonomous status, all materials needed to cover Basic General Education, as well as a large portion of secondary education, have been developed. Another problem was the standardization of the language. Euskera was divided into several distinct dialect zones. Dialectical variety also resulted from a mostly oral transmission of the language (Siguan 1988:468). It was only in 1968 that the Real Academia de la Lengua Vasca (Royal Academy of the Basque Language) began to standardize the language (Michelena 1977). The standardized version is called "Batua." The standardized spelling of Euskera is Euskara, with an a to distinguish it from Euskera. Batua is the version of the language taught in the schools. Euskera is the Gipúzcoan dialect spelling of the word and usually used to refer to all forms of spoken Basque (Urla 1987:iv). Formulating a single set of grammatical and orthographic rules and modernizing the vocabulary have provided major difficulties and Siguan questions whether Euskera will be altered as it spreads, "losing its purity and individual characteristics, and drawing more nearer to Spanish" (Siguan 1988: 468-469).

In spite of these problems, the Department of Linguistic Policy has been able to implement comprehensive language planning since 1982, incorporating many ikastolas

into the public system, and encouraging the organization of new ikastolas. The number of children attending them had increased even before 1982, as depicted in the following table: (The figures reflect the changes in the number of students attending ikastolas, not increases in the overall student population).

Table 3. Number of Children Attending Ikastolas in the Basque Provinces

| Area               | 1969-70 | 1980-81 | 1981-82 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Guipúzcoa          | 5,770   | 37,145  | 39,128  |
| Viscaya            | 1,958   | 17,175  | 19,107  |
| Alava              | 171     | 5,086   | 5,509   |
| Total:             |         |         |         |
| Pais Vasco:        | 8,889   | 54,302  | 58,235  |
| Navarra            | 348     | 5,369   | 5,828   |
| French Pays Basque | 8       | 506     | 564     |

(Siguan 1988: 465).

By the 1987 - 1988 school year, 688 students were attending Model B schools in Rioja Alavesa, according to statistics obtained from the Department of Education. There are no Model D, or private ikastolas in Rioja Alavesa, and the distribution of students studying in the Model A and B curricula is provided in Table 4.

Three teachers of the ikastola in Lapuebla explained that in Model B schools, such as the one in Lapuebla, language and mathematics are taught in Castilian, and the other courses in Euskera. Folk songs in Euskera, folk dances and pelota (handball) are taught by special instructors. Two of the nine Model B schools listed below

are not called "ikastolas," the ones located in Laguardia

Table 4. Number of Children in Model A and Model B Schools in Rioja Alavesa

| Village        | Number of Students |            |
|----------------|--------------------|------------|
|                | Model A            | Model B    |
| Laguardia      | 204                | 81         |
| Labastida      | 81                 | 86         |
| Elciego        | 35                 | 153        |
| Oyon           | 261                | 134        |
| Villabuena     |                    | 13         |
| Lapuebla       |                    | 127        |
| Lanciego       |                    | 56         |
| Elvillar       |                    | 13         |
| Banos del Ebro |                    | 25         |
| Totals         | <u>581</u>         | <u>688</u> |

and Elciego. A school administrator said he thought this naming of schools was largely political since non-Basque political parties controlled the Ayuntamientos of Elciego and Laguardia.

Preschool programs, for two to five year olds, also encourage an early introduction to the language. Such a preschool was established in Lapuebla in 1979, as was the bilingual curriculum (model B option) for five to ten year olds. Most parents in the village send their children to the intensive early introduction to the language which is funded by the autonomous government. Parents said the program provided convenient and free daycare. Many also considered it important for children to attend the preschool program so that they would not be behind in Euskera when they started school at age five or six. Teachers reported

that children entering the ikastola without this training were at a disadvantage and needed special attention to catch up.

As noted in Chapter Seven, the PNV-led village government of Lapuebla decided to build the ikastola, pool, fronton and other amenities, taking advantage of available grants and low interest loans from the autonomous Basque government to do so. These projects were not subject to the vote of the general electorate, but many Lapueblans said they continued to vote for the PNV village leaders because they think the above facilities are beneficial. In order to meet the requirement that parents be given a choice of sending their children to a Model A or a Model B (bilingual) school, aid was provided to establish Model B schools in Rioja Alavesa. But one school administrator commented that the stated policy of offering a choice of types of schools to parents is often more of an ideal than a reality. As he explained it:

If there is a demand for model A and model B, you should be able to create one center in one village, and one in another, and with transportation provided, solve the problem. This has been proposed, but has not worked. Each village wants to maintain its school and parents don't want children to travel to another village to study. Parents think the village loses its life, it's a form of trauma for them.

His statement reflects one of the motivations I found for parental support of the ikastola in Lapuebla--the school was a means of keeping children in the village. Transportation was also a consideration. Although a school bus for older

children was provided to the Model A school in Laguardia, and fourteen children from Lapuebla attended, but transportation was not available for the younger children as their school day schedule differs from that of the older children. A few parents did say that it was this transportation problem that kept them from sending their young children to the model A school in Laguardia.

The new ikastola was built and completed in Lapuebla in 1987. A model B program had been in existence in the village since 1979, but space was minimal in the old building. With the construction of the new school, pueblo leaders also hoped that children from other villages would be drawn to attend the Lapueblan ikastola. The school opening was celebrated on November 14, the village's annual Dia de Gracias (harvest Thanksgiving), as discussed in Chapter Seven. José Antonio Ardanza, the president of the Basque autonomous community, delivered the dedication speech of the new school. The speech, which he gave first in Euskera and then in Castilian, conveys the idea that a Basque identity can be regained in Rioja Alavesa, and that one important means of doing this is through teaching Euskera to the next generation. The following is my translation of a passage from this speech:

This day of Thanksgiving has profound meaning because the vineyards which we are now planting with this ikastola will give fruit not only for the next year or the year after. They will give fruit for many years, many generations, and I think this is important. I think it is important that Lapuebla de Labarca, a

pueblo that feels Basque, can begin at this moment, little by little, to recover that which is the elemental and fundamental basis of our identity--which is Euskera.

Ardanza expresses the belief that language equals culture and identity, and that knowledge of Euskera is an integral element of being Basque. As noted earlier in this chapter, most adults I knew in Rioja Alavesa had different ideas about the introduction of Euskera to the zone.

Reactions to the Teaching of Euskera in the  
Schools of Rioja Alavesa

The parents of fourteen children of Lapuebla send them to the Model A school in Laguardia, instead of to the pueblo ikastola. These parents preferred that their children take Euskera only as a language course, rather than study in the bilingual program offered in Lapuebla. I discussed Euskera with one of these couples, Ana and Pepe, who expressed misgivings about the current language policies regarding Euskera:

Ana: In Vitoria, in all of the province of Alava, apart from a few pueblos that border Bilbao, well, no one spoke Basque. So, if you don't speak the language, it does not draw you as much.

Barbara: What do you think about your children learning Euskera?

Pepe: It is a good thing.

Ana: Here the pull is because of the pueblos, because here the children had to leave the pueblo to go to school. What they told us was that if we got the ikastola, it was for the children to stay here. But they did not do it precisely for the Basque. They did it so that the children would stay here. We have chosen the national school--but they have to go to Laguardia for this. We send our children to Laguardia

and they take a course in Basque. Here (in Lapuebla) the reverse--they give them more classes in Basque, because here they are more interested in learning Basque, more than other studies. The idea is that they are imposing it. Now you have to learn this because it is officially required in the Basque Country. This is the inconvenience I see--that you are forced to learn a language, and for us it is a bother, because we did not know it.

Pepe: I prefer they learn English more than Euskera.

Ana: The Euskera we see as a necessity--because it is an obligation. If it was not an obligation, it would not bother me.

Pepe: It's good to know everything; to be able to learn all. The bad thing is that you learn one thing and leave off the most essential--this is the problem. It is good to know Basque, English, and everything.

Ana: You need to talk to families whose children are in the ikastola because they will think differently, because we have our children in the national school.

Ana and Pepe, both in their early thirties, with two children aged ten and twelve, raise several issues regarding the language policy which requires students in the public schools of the Basque Country to study Euskera. Ana said that because Euskera was not spoken in much of Alava, including Rioja Alavesa, the language did not attract her as much as it would someone who grew up speaking it. She does not feel the affection and loyalty to the language that she imagines a native speaker would feel. She also says it is "a bother" because they do not know the language. Other parents expressed concern that their children are at a disadvantage in learning Euskera compared to children whose parents speak it. As one mother said: "Since we do not speak Euskera, our children won't be able to perfect it."



Ana notes that it is important to many village parents for their children not to have to commute to school. She said some in Lapuebla support the ikastola not "exactly for the Basque," but also because the school enabled children to stay in the village.

I did speak to other adults in Lapuebla and surrounding villages, in addition to interviewing school children, teachers and school administrators about the teaching of Euskera in the schools of Rioja Alavesa. Even among parents who sent their children to the ikastola and wanted them to learn Euskera, motivations were not usually based on a wish to preserve and promote Euskera because it was considered an integral part of Basque identity. Aside from wanting their children to remain in the village, many parents wanted their children to learn Euskera to improve their employment opportunities in the Basque Country. Although certification in Euskera is required for only a few government positions, many in Rioja Alavesa thought that most employers in the Basque Country would give preference to those who knew the language. For example, one woman who was very much in favor of her children learning Euskera, commented:

If you live in Euskadi, it's where you have to eat, where you have to earn your living--to live here, Euskera is essential--to get jobs, before French or English, Euskera is required. If we needed to get work tomorrow, those of us who don't know Euskera, they'll leave us waiting in line.

Another young couple, who also sent their children to the ikastola, told me:

husband: All of my family is from this area, and no one in my family speaks Euskera.

wife: But if you look for work now, you will have much better luck if you speak Euskera. Here, for example, the majority of teachers are from Logroño. So, if they want to keep their job, they have to learn Euskera, if not, they have to leave.

husband: You have to know Euskera for everything. In all of the Basque country, only a few speak Euskera.

wife: I say that while you don't sacrifice the other subjects, it is good to teach Euskera. In Catalonia they teach everything in Catalan. In Galicia, they teach everything in Galician.

These comments indicate that even for parents who want their children to learn Euskera, a primary motivation may be concern about the children's employability in the Basque Country. When I asked a school administrator what effect he thought the teaching of Euskera would have on the culture of Rioja Alavesa, he answered, "knowledge of Euskera will help people get jobs--this motivates people to learn the language, for example, for administrative and teaching posts."

I did not always have to ask direct questions to learn about peoples' ideas regarding the teaching of Euskera in Rioja Alavesa. It was a popular issue among locals. Individuals often volunteered their opinions, and I also listened in on discussions about it. For example, when I was sharing the cena (evening meal) with one family, the four year old boy answered a question his father asked him with "bai," which means "yes" in Euskera. Neither the child's father, mother, nor older siblings spoke Euskera.

The boy's use of Euskera at the family dinner prompted the father to give me his opinion about his son learning the language. He said he had been quite angry recently when this same child came home from school and complained that he had been reprimanded for speaking Castilian in the classroom. The man said he is afraid his children will get confused by the language program which requires them to speak a language in school which they cannot use at home. He is afraid they will not learn to speak Castilian as well as they should. He said he thought the policy of requiring children to learn Euskera was politically motivated. At this point, his wife began arguing with him. She said that if their children wanted a job in the Basque Country, they would have to speak Euskera. He accused her of being a nacionalista (Basque nationalist) and she countered by saying she was only being practical.

This discussion reflects the two main responses given during the family interview sessions when I asked forty adults in Lapuebla, Laguardia and Elciego what they thought of the policy of teaching Euskera in the schools of Rioja Alavesa (see Table 5). Seventeen (42.5%) of the respondents said it was important for children to learn Euskera in order to work in the Basque Country. Of these, four said that although Euskera was needed for work, they would prefer their children to learn English or French. Fourteen (35%) of the forty respondents said they thought the language was

TABLE 5  
ADULT REACTIONS: EUSKERA TEACHING  
IN THE SCHOOLS OF RIOJA ALAVESA  
(N=40)

| RESPONSES |   | NUMBER | %    |
|-----------|---|--------|------|
| 1.        | Euskera is important for finding jobs in the Basque Country.                | 17     | 42.5 |
| 2.        | Euskera is being introduced for political reasons.                          | 14     | 35.0 |
| 3.        | Euskera is important for children to recuperate Basque identity.            | 3      | 7.5  |
| 4.        | Learning Euskera is a good idea because it is good to know other languages. | 3      | 7.5  |
| 5.        | Euskera must be learned because it is a government requirement.             | 2      | 5.0  |
| 6.        | Prefers child to study English, but Euskera also good to learn.             | 1      | 2.5  |

being introduced for political reasons. For these, five stated a preference for the learning of English or French and/or a concern that the quality of Castilian would decline among the children. Of the remaining nine respondents, three said it was good to learn Euskera because the more languages one knows, the better, two said it had to be learned because it was a government requirement, one said he preferred his child learn English, but thought it good to learn Euskera too, and three respondents said that it was important for the next generation to learn Euskera in order to regain Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa.

Not all respondents at any given family interview session were always unanimous in their opinion about the teaching of Euskera in Rioja Alavesa. The question sometimes catalyzed a debate between family members. For example, the following exchange between a man and his cousin who was visiting at the time of the interview, exemplifies expression of disagreement. Roberto supported the introduction of Euskera to Rioja Alavesa as a means of recovering Basque identity in the zone while his cousin, Justo, opposed the introduction of the language and felt the policy was politically motivated:

Justo: I think it's a just a matter of business, like having to have an identification card--it's obligatory to learn it. Who says so? Those in power. Here no one ever spoke Basque, except someone who came from there.

Roberto: Well, I think the first people who lived here spoke it and now we are learning it to respect those ancestors. For me, it's a culture. That's my idea on it, even though I don't speak it. But they have to give people time to learn it. They can't learn it in a day.

Justo: Now, life is complicated by this language issue. For example, you need Euskera for jobs--maybe the undertaker will even have to speak in Euskera to the dead.

Roberto: If we had had democracy here for the last forty years instead of Franco, we would all speak Euskera, but it was prohibited. Even many of those who spoke it stopped speaking it. Even in Bilbao, those who were not from a caserio did not speak Euskera.

Justo: But what if we lost Castilian, and this happened in the other autonomous communities too? How are you going to travel as before, when Sancho Panza and Don Quixote journeyed about the country, and be understood in the other regions? Or what?

Roberto: Even though they are learning Euskera, they are not losing Castilian.

Justo: But there are a lot of Basques from the caserios who speak Castilian badly.

Roberto: They were from before, those of today, no. Those who know Basque are from a new generation.

The ideas of children who attend the ikastola in Lapuebla as to why they should learn Euskera vary somewhat from those of the adults. I administered a questionnaire to 26 of the 128 students, aged ten to thirteen (see Appendix B). Most of these children have been learning Euskera since they were two to three years old as they attended the village preschool program. They are fluent in Euskera and take all of their classes, other than mathematics and the Castilian language, in it. When asked what purpose they thought the learning of Euskera served, eight answered it would enable them to work in the Basque Country, six said it would enable them to speak and understand the language, three said they did not know, and eight gave answers relating the learning of the language to identity: for example, "to be a good Basque," "to be a good Basque in some years." These latter children's answers reflect an association of knowing the language with being a "good Basque."

The results of these questionnaires indicate that the ikastola is succeeding in promoting the correlation of Euskera and Basque identity among many of the students. However, the ikastola is not succeeding in promoting the use

of Euskera much beyond the school. There is discontinuity between the speech community of the family and the streets, and the language of the school. Although many parents expressed pride that their children could communicate with Euskera-speaking tourists, and understand radio and television programs in Euskera, the language was not a means of daily communication. When I asked students how often they used Euskera in various settings, they answered as summarized in the following table:

Table 6. Students' Use of Euskera

| SETTING         | FREQUENCY OF USE |           |              |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------|--------------|
|                 | Almost Always    | Sometimes | Almost Never |
| Home            |                  | 11        | 15           |
| Streets         |                  | 12        | 14           |
| Other Occasions | 12               | 11        | 2            |

There were basically three kinds of "other occasions" where the students reported using the language (some reported more than one of the choices), summarized as follows:

Table 7. "Other Occasions" for Student Use of Euskera

| OCCASION |   | Number of Students who reported using Euskera for this occasion: |
|----------|---|--|
| 1.       | School sponsored trips to Vizcaya or Guipuzcoa:               | 16   |
| 2.       | With visiting friends, relatives, or others who know Euskera: | 9  |
| 3.       | In school:  | 6  |

All of the students use Euskera daily in school, and take classes in it, so most did not consider this an "other occasion." The intent of the question was to find out the contexts other than the school in which the language was used. The main time students have an opportunity to use Euskera outside of school is when their teachers take them on one-week summer field trips to villages in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. These trips are specifically designed to give students the experience of hearing and speaking Euskera in daily life. Teachers of the ikastola told me one of the main obstacles in encouraging the use of Euskera outside the classroom is what the teachers perceive as a lack of parental support for Euskera. As one teacher said:

The problem is in the home. Many parents are against the language policies and some send their children here out of convenience. Parental attitudes influence the children . . . the children associate Euskera with the ikastola and with us. They speak to us in Euskera. But they already have Castilian very ingrained. It is the easiest . . . and they have siblings who don't speak Euskera. This is why we take them, at the end of the course, outside of this atmosphere. We take them on an excursion to a village with a "Basque" atmosphere--so they can see that Euskera lives and exists--that people communicate in Euskera. Some say we are trying to colonize with the language, but I think it's more like an awakening. We try to teach a pride in the country. But then the family influences what the teachers try to teach.

This individual implies that Lapuebla lacks a "Basque" atmosphere because Euskera is not the language of communication in the village. Euskera is considered an integral element of Basqueness by this teacher. She depicts



the monolingual parents of her students as adverse to Basque identity and pride in the Basque Country because she feels they do not encourage the use of Euskera at home, and that many of them do not favor the teaching of it and only send their children to the ikastola out of convenience.

As the survey with adults showed, only a minority correlated the learning of Euskera with recuperation of Basque identity. But many parents favor the language policy because they see proficiency in Euskera as qualifying their children for more jobs, and many do encourage their children to learn and use it. A few parents even try to learn Euskera themselves with the aim of speaking it to their children and thereby improving the children's chances of learning it. This, in fact, was given as the main motivation of adults who take evening classes in Euskera in Rioja Alavesa.

#### Adult Education in Euskera in Rioja Alavesa

Although the teaching of Euskera to schoolchildren is the main avenue of introduction of the language to Rioja Alavesa, some adults have made efforts to learn the language. There were two kinds of opportunities for adults to take classes in Euskera in Rioja Alavesa in 1987--one sponsored by the Basque government and one through a private organization. Approximately ten employees of the autonomous Basque government who worked in Rioja Alavesa attended a weekly class in Euskera held in Laguardia. This course was

paid for by the Basque government, and free to the participants. They were required to take it to meet the stipulation of the Basque government's 1982 law for the normalization of Euskera which states that government functionaries be taught Euskera.

The Basque government sponsors and funds another program to teach Euskera to adults who volunteer to learn it, called HABE--Helduen Alfabetatze Berreuskalduntzerako Erakundea (Institute for the "Alfabetización" and "Reeuskaldunización" of Adults), which does not operate in Rioja Alavesa. HABE was created by the Basque Government in 1981 and approved by the Basque Parliament in 1983. A pamphlet, published in English by HABE, describes the organization as follows:

At present, the network which deals with the "euskaldunización" (the teaching of Basque to those who don't know it) and the "alfabetización" (teaching those who already speak Basque to read and write it) of adults stretches throughout Euskal Herria (the homeland of those who speak Basque), and reaches a wide range of people: each year more than 50,000 people benefit from the assistance and services provided by HABE (HABE 1987:5).

But HABE does not offer classes in Rioja Alavesa. An administrator of the separate program for government employees to learn Euskera, which holds the only government sponsored class for adults to learn Euskera in Rioja Alavesa, said that HABE did not operate in the zone because it was thought that there was not enough adult interest in

learning Euskera there. She said the focus of efforts to teach Euskera in Rioja Alavesa are aimed at the children.

Adults, other than the government functionaries, do have an opportunity to take classes in Euskera in Rioja Alavesa through a private, non-profit organization called AEK (Alfabetatzen Euskalduntzen Koordinakundea--learning to read and write, learning to speak, and coordinating in Euskera). Two of the eight AEK teachers who work in Rioja Alavesa explained to me that the organization was founded in the early 1960s, as a grassroots, semi-clandestine movement for teaching Euskera to adults. They estimate there are about 40,000 adult students throughout the Basque Country who take classes through AEK. The Basque government does pay 35% of the annual fee of 13,000 pesetas which AEK charges each student. AEK staff also petition village governments for grants and occasionally get some funding from them.

In 1986, there were 122 adult students enrolled in the AEK classes in Rioja Alavesa. The classes met for one and one half hours, five days a week, in the early evenings, and teachers traveled to the villages where there were five or more people interested in taking the class. AEK has been offering classes in Rioja Alavesa for six years and approximately eight people have completed the five year course. Usually, the teachers told me, the drop out rate is high after the first or second year. In Lapuebla, there

were eleven students in the beginners class in 1986. But only four people in the village were interested in taking the class in 1987, and only one of these was a student from the 1986 class.

The teachers described the majority of their students as females, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. They estimated that 85 to 90% of these were young mothers with children in the preschools and ikastolas who wanted to help their children learn Euskera. They said it was a rare case for a father to attend. One teacher concluded that men "seemed to have the sexist attitude that education is the business of the mothers."

I knew three young women in Lapuebla who had taken the beginners class during 1986. Two were young mothers, twenty-one and twenty-three years old, and one was a single female nurse, twenty-one, who lived with her parents. All three discontinued the course after the first year. Each of them said that they had enjoyed the classes, but that the schedule was too time consuming. Both of the young mothers said they wanted to learn Euskera in order to help their children with it. The nurse felt strongly about identifying herself as a Basque and said she thought it was important to learn more about Basque language and culture.

I also met with the four young Lapueblan women who hoped to sign up for the 1987 class. They were all single, ages eighteen to twenty-two. They all worked in the village

clothing factory and lived with their parents. The girls said that the classes would give them something to do in the evenings. They also looked forward to participating in the AEK sponsored "cenas" (dinners) given for students' birthdays and other holidays. These young women saw the language classes as a break in a monotonous routine. They did not express a strong fervor for learning the language for its own sake.

The AEK teachers said they think the Basque government does not allocate enough money for teaching Euskera to adults: "They think the regeneration of Euskera for adults is a lost cause. They only want to teach the children and give money to the ikastolas, and consider the adults already lost to the language." These young teachers work for low pay and liken themselves to missionaries:

We are trying to contribute a grain of sand to the process of relearning Basque culture and language. Here, (in Rioja Alavesa), Euskera was lost for six hundred years, and everyone knows the pressures to which it was subjected.

The number of adult students in Rioja Alavesa who have seriously stayed with the course seems to support the government's notion that adults of the zone are not sufficiently motivated to learn the language. The majority of those who do take the classes seem to do so for the practical reason of helping their children learn Euskera. I did know two adults, however, who were learning it because of intrinsic interest in Basque language and culture; the

young nurse mentioned above, and a middle-aged professional man from Laguardia. This man was one of the few people I talked to about language issues who made a distinction between learning Euskera for political and instrumental motivations, and learning it for personal satisfaction and out of genuine interest in it:

For Euskera to enter into La Rioja, it needs to be a voluntary and personal option, of the parents and the children, with all respect, and without the danger that tomorrow, the child who doesn't know Euskera, will be considered a second class Basque citizen. Only this way can Euskera enter into this blessed land. I think it is magnificent for the language to be learned here, when the mission is to teach Euskera and Basque culture to people who truly want to learn it. I learned Euskera and speak it fairly fluently. If I hadn't been convinced, I wouldn't have learned it. But no one said to me, "you have to learn Euskera." The person who doesn't want to learn Euskera, should not be considered less of a Basque. The people who have come here to teach Euskera, have, little by little, come to identify Euskera with certain political tendencies. This has produced conflicts in the people here, and, the fact that Euskera is now imposed, has made it odious to some. I think it should be presented as yet another aspect of the Basque culture, a linguistic aspect, that, with Castilian, which is the language spoken here, is mutually respected.

This man does not equate being a good Basque with the ability to speak Euskera, although he had studied the language out of personal interest. The Basque Government's language policies which require Euskera for some government posts and school children to study the language do imply that one is more Basque, or a better Basque, with knowledge of Euskera. This view was also voiced by those in Rioja Alavesa who said the "Vasco-Vascos" are those who speak

Euskera, and by schoolchildren who said they are learning the language in order to become good Basques.

In the language itself, there is a word which distinguishes the native speaker of Euskera, which is Euskaldun. A "new" Basque speaker is referred to as an Euskaldunberri, and a person who does not speak Basque at all is called an Erdaldun. An Euskaldunberri is more likely to have learned the language in an institutional setting and therefore more likely to speak the standardized version of the language, Batua, which is readily distinguishable from dialectical forms learned in the family setting (Urla 1987).

Since some children in Rioja Alavesa study in Model B schools and gain fluency in Euskera, and some study in Model A schools and take Euskera only as a language course, not all children are gaining equal knowledge of the language. When I asked a group of Lapueblan adolescents if there was any difference between children who know Euskera and those who do not, one of them replied "yes, those who don't know Euskera are treated as inferior by those who do." The other youngsters agreed. It might be predicted, then, that differential knowledge of Euskera may be divisive to pueblo identity, and a re-study should be done to investigate this question. Also, since the majority of children in Lapuebla do attend a Model B school, while the majority in Laguardia do not, this difference may very well serve to sharpen interpueblo identities and stereotypes. But although the

teaching of Euskera in Rioja Alavesa may exacerbate conflict within and between pueblos, the language is also serving to divide all of Rioja Alavesa from the neighboring autonomous community of Rioja. Even outside the classroom, Euskera is a visible marker of distinction between the two communities.

Euskera Outside the Classroom in Rioja Alavesa:  
Its Symbolic Functions

According to the 1982 law for the normalization of Euskera; road, street, and place name signs now appear in both Euskera and Castilian throughout the Basque Country. As one crosses the bridge into Lapuebla from the autonomous community of Rioja, a large green and white sign announces entry into Euskadi--País Vasco. Within the village, street signs appear in both languages. Since the Castilian name, Lapuebla de Labarca, was the first name of the village, it does not have a corresponding Basque name, although Labarca is now sometimes spelled with a k - Labarka - in some publications since the letter c does not exist in Euskeran orthography. At the site of Laguardia, however, there is thought to have been an ancient Basque village called Biasteri (Ajamil et al. 1985:22). The sign at the entry of the Laguardia contains both names.

In addition to Euskera appearing on signs throughout Rioja Alavesa, one can go into local bars and shops and buy newspapers in Euskera which are not sold across the river. There are now radio and television stations that broadcast solely in Euskera and some parents in Lapuebla said they



encourage their children to watch programs in Euskera so that they can practice the language. Some people in Rioja Alavesa have also begun to give their children Basque names. Skeptics say this is just a fad, while others claim that this naming is an indication that people are adopting a Basque identity. Velilla examined birth records from six villages of Rioja Alavesa, representing 5,000 of the total population of 10,000. He found that 100 of the 299 children born into the population, from 1978 to 1982, were given Basque names (for example: Iñaki, Ikar, Aroa, Aintxane, Izaskun, etc.) (Velilla 1983:9).

Another indication of the use of Euskera by people who will probably never learn the language is that many have started using a few words of the language in every-day interactions. One of the most prevalent words is agur which is the word for goodbye in Euskera, and which I often heard substituted for adios, even by people who were not enthusiastic about the teaching of Euskera in Rioja Alavesa. Also, village church choirs learn and sing hymns in Euskera, although they may not understand all, or any, of the words.

These uses of Euskera show that the language can function symbolically without being a means of communication. The bilingual signs, the Basque names, the use of a few words in Euskera, are markers which distinguish Rioja Alaveses from neighbors across the Ebro. Ruiz Olabuénaga, et al. (1983) found similar adaptations of

Euskera in the non-Euskera speaking areas of the Basque Country they examined. Additionally, they noted that public meetings are sometimes opened with a salutation in Euskera, but conducted in Castilian. These authors hypothesize that such symbolic uses of the language should increase peoples' efforts to recuperate Euskera as a means of communication:

Can a language recover the symbolic function independently from the pragmatic? At what point can a people, politically organized, content themselves with the symbolic function of Euskera and not instigate programs to recuperate its instrumental function? (Ruiz Olabuénaga et al. 1983:75)

From my observations in Rioja Alavesa, it did not appear that the symbolic functions of Euskera were correlated to an increased enthusiasm for full recovery of the language as a means of communication. One woman who did not think her children should be required to learn Euskera always said "agur" when I left her house. She also thought Iñaki was a pretty name for her brother and his wife to give to their new son. Although such individuals will never learn to speak Euskera, and are not motivated to do so, their use of Basque names and words does distinguish them from inhabitants of the autonomous community of Rioja--in this sense, Euskera serves as a symbolic marker in distinguishing the Basque and Riojan autonomous communities.

Aside from the general symbolic functions of Euskera, the language policies have consequences on individual lives. One of the age groups most affected are those in their late teens to early twenties, whose employment opportunities may

be limited if they do not know Euskera. In these cases, the requirement of Euskera for some positions in the Basque autonomous government may serve to alienate the non-Euskera speaking youth from a Basque identity.

#### Euskera and Perceptions of Employment Opportunities

Earlier in this chapter, I addressed the introduction of Euskera in the schools of Rioja Alavesa and discussed parental and student reactions to language policies. Most parents, and some students of the Lapuebla ikastola, correlated knowledge of the language with improved job opportunities in the Basque Country. Many parents were anxious that their young children gain fluency in the language for this reason. The students I surveyed at the ikastola are fluent in it for the most part.

But many people in their late teens to early twenties have not benefitted from an early immersion in the language, as the younger students I surveyed had. The former age group were too old to attend the preschools established in the late 1970s to teach toddlers Euskera, and most only studied the language as a course for less than four years. This is not sufficient exposure to gain fluency in Euskera.

One woman complained that her twenty-three year old daughter, who trained as a teacher, is having difficulty finding a teaching job in the Basque Country because she does not know Euskera. The mother felt this was unfair since her daughter did not have the opportunity to study the

language for most of her school years and was therefore at a disadvantage compared to children who grew up in Euskera-speaking households. Although they are taxpaying citizens of Alava, a Basque province, she said, she feels her child is being denied equal opportunity because she does not know Euskera.

Most seventeen to twenty year olds I knew had a pragmatic or neutral view of the language policies. Angel, an eighteen year old who studies electrical engineering in Logroño, described himself and most of his friends as "politically apathetic." He said he does not care about being Basque. He had to study Euskera as a language course for three years but did not enjoy it and remembers little of it. I came to know Angel and his family because his father asked me to teach his sons English. I agreed to help them and usually went to their home two evenings a week and gave an English lesson in exchange for sharing in the family cena and conversation. Angel, his nineteen year old brother Jesus, and their fifteen year old brother, Javier, were usually present for the lessons. The two older boys were very keen to learn English as they felt they needed it for their career pursuits--Angel for electrical engineering and Jesus for medicine. Most medical journals and electronics manuals are published in English, they said. Angel was extremely pleased when I found an English-Spanish electronics dictionary for him. These boys considered

English would be the most useful language to learn to get ahead in their particular careers.

Angel and Javier attended schools in Logroño, and therefore associated with friends from Rioja. This might have influenced their apolitical, somewhat anti-Basque attitudes. Jesus attended medical school in Vitoria and told me he felt some discrimination there because he did not know Euskera. He said, "they spoil the Basque students," who, he felt, had better work opportunities in the Basque Country.

Two girls I knew, both seventeen, were learning secretarial skills. They had studied Euskera in school in Laguardia for five years, for four hours a week, but said they have learned little of the language. They would like to know it better to improve their job opportunities, but said it is a very difficult language. They had a friend from Bilbao, an Euskera speaker who visits Lapuebla during the summers and holidays, and she would help them with their homework in Euskera and practice speaking it with them.

The language planning policies of the autonomous Basque government have not fostered an identification as Basque in the young people discussed above. Rather, their lack of Euskera has made them feel somewhat disadvantaged in employment opportunities. At the beginning of this chapter, I noted Eastman's (1979) observation that language planning as a means of fostering ethnic solidarity is more likely to

be successful among groups who already speak the language. Otherwise, Edwards (1985) posits, the introduction of a language to a group who does not use it may be artificial in that the language is not a part of daily life and also, may be an academic, standardized version of the language.

These comments, in light of the case of Euskera in Rioja Alavesa, could provoke a negative response to the question of whether language planning should be used to promote ethnic identity in a group who does not speak the language. This conclusion leads to a questioning of the focus on language as a primary criteria for membership in the ethnic group. Such an ideology might alienate those who do not know the language, who may also perceive themselves as second class ethnics because they do not know it. Both of these effects were observed in some individuals in Rioja Alavesa.

Yet, the autonomous Basque government did not force the village of Lapuebla to build an ikastola. Children are not required to study in a model B, bilingual curriculum. But as this chapter has illustrated, motivations for parental support for the ikastola do not match the motivations and beliefs of ethnic leaders regarding the teaching of Euskera. Parents, for the most part, wanted their children to study in the village, and to improve work opportunities in the Basque Country. This is an example of how a national identity, in this case an ethnic national identity, is being

mediated and reinterpreted through the local context. For many children of Rioja Alavesa who have been studying Euskera since they were two or three years old, the language does function as a marker of Basque identity. But since they do not use the language outside of the classroom to any extent, will they continue to view it as an important identity marker if they do not use it after they leave school? Restudies will be needed to explore this issue.

Also, as noted, Euskera has come to serve as a symbolic marker of distinction even for people who will never learn it and who may not support the Basque government's language policies. The Basque signs, words and names which have been incorporated into the every day life of Rioja Alavesa function to distinguish the zone from the Rioja across the river, the "Cuna del Castellano."

Given the complexities and ambiguities of Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa, it is difficult to make predictions about the future of Basque identity in the zone. But Rioja Alavesa's incorporation into the post-Franco autonomous Basque community is subtly, and not so subtly, affecting peoples' sense of who they are. In this research, I have tried to gauge how definitions of Basque identity may be adapting to incorporate Rioja Alaveses, and how indications of Rioja Alaveses' participation in processes of identity change are detectable in local identity contexts. Findings are reviewed and summarized in the next chapter and

the questions and answers provoked by the research discussed. The relevance of this case to broader issues of ethnic identity is considered.



CHAPTER 9  
UNCERTAIN IDENTITY: BEING BASQUE IN RIOJA ALAVESA

In the Introduction, I stated that I hoped to document "change-in-the-making" in Rioja Alavesa. Although I advocated a view of ethnic identity as processual, subjective and malleable even before beginning research in Spain, I did not fully anticipate the complexities and ambiguities of the processes of construction of Basque identity I encountered in Rioja Alavesa. Franco's authoritarian regime controlled the media, the schools and the arts for forty years, but did not succeed in molding the populace to its view of Spanish person- and nationhood. With the advent of democracy in post-Franco Spain and subsequent legitimization of the regional autonomous governments, political and other leaders of the autonomous regions are mounting efforts to articulate regional cultural and linguistic identities.

The Galicians, the Basques, and the Catalans have arguably the most convincing historical precedents and linguistic bases for distinct ethnic identities. Basque and Catalan nationalist leaders have been the most thorough in implementing programs and policies of cultural and linguistic revival since democratization. Their aim is not

just to preserve language and culture, but to bind people into the Basque and Catalan nations. Woolard refers to nation building strategies such as these as "the politicization of ethnicity" (1986:66).

From my own Scottish research, and other case studies (Kuter 1985, Eidheim 1969, Woolard 1985, 1986, Emmet 1982, Verderey 1976), I knew that groups labeled as ethnic entities are not always homogeneous. Regional, class, rural/urban, ethnic leader/folk, migrant/native, and religious differences often distinguish people within ethnic groups and within ethnic territories. Subgroups do not necessarily share an identical repertoire of racial, cultural, linguistic, and ancestral traits; or adhere to the same ethnic ideology or nationalist agenda. The interrelations of these subgroups have not been a focus of most studies of ethnicity. Such research contributes to understanding processes of ethnic group formation and ethnic mobilization (Worsley 1984, Bentley 1987, Grillo 1980). Rioja Alavesa is a prime example of a subregion of the Basque Country geographically and historically isolated from the mainstreams of Basque nationalism and Basque identity, and therefore was an excellent site for the examination of processes of identity maintenance and change.

I traced the evolution of Rioja Alavesa's regional identity as part of the geographic wine district of Rioja, and contrasted this background to the evolution of Basque

identity. The Basque nationalist movement, as it developed in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the northern Basque cities, focused definitions of Basqueness on features of the northern Basques which distinguished them from the migrants from other regions of Spain who were moving to the industrializing north in large numbers. Basque surnames and genealogy, racial features, the Basque language, customs of the caseríos, and the heritage of the Basque fueros and Basque collective nobility were used in distinguishing a unique Basque people.

Once the evolutions of the distinct identities of Rioja Alaveses and "heartland" Basques were traced, I thought my task would be to document the impacts of the autonomous Basque government's policies and programs of linguistic and cultural revival, and economic aid, on the communities of Rioja Alavesa. Once in the field, I soon learned that this perception of Rioja Alaveses as acted upon by the regional government was too simplistic. It failed to account for the participation of many Rioja Alaveses in reinterpreting Basque identity through local identity contexts, or for adaptations in Basque ideology which favored inclusion of Rioja Alaveses into the Basque ethnic community.

Using the exploratory methods of processual ethnography, I wanted to be open to "recording uncertainty and disorder on the ethnographic scene" (Moore 1987:730). This approach facilitated my understanding of the processes

of change as more complex and multi-faceted than I had imagined. However, I was still faced with choices which would limit my inquiries. From the varied stream of everyday life, I had to cut out segments for closer examination and pick parts which would hopefully tell the most about changing identity. This selection process led me to focus on the pueblo, the wine culture, and language.

I did not emphasize genealogy and kinship, frequently used in delimiting ethnic groups (Isajiw 1974). Although the interpretation of prehistory and medieval history is being used to establish ancestral links of Rioja Alaveses to Basques, contemporary kinship relations do not reflect ethnic endogamy in Rioja Alaveses. The majority of surnames are Castilian, and intermarriage between inhabitants of Rioja Alaveses and the autonomous community of Rioja continues. This was not a context which showed evidence of identity change. Also, more recent formulations of Basque ideology emphasize territory and language more than genealogy and race in defining Basqueness. The pueblo, the wine culture and language were the three bases of local identity which showed effects of Rioja Alaveses's incorporation into the autonomous Basque community.

During my first weeks in Lapuebla, on the daily afternoon walks with the cuadrilla, the women's knowledge of and interest in the vineyards was immediately evident. Also, as we viewed the surrounding pueblos of Elciego,

Laguardia and Fuenmayor from hilltop vistas, the women would describe each village's distinct character and assure me I had chosen the best village to live in--Lapuebla was without doubt the friendliest and most outgoing pueblo in the area. I also soon began to hear people discussing and debating the Basque government's language policies; and noticed the bilingual road and street signs, and occasional use of Basque words by locals--Euskera had become part of every day life in Lapuebla, if mostly in symbolic ways.

Association with the work of the vineyards and Riojan wine, and affective ties to the natal pueblo, were primary ways I observed these people demarcating "we" - "them" boundaries. The introduction of the Basque language provided a new element which implied change in longstanding language patterns and the speech community. I wanted to investigate Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa from an interpueblo perspective, to understand why some communities were more receptive to being Basque than others. I also wanted to explore the evolution of Rioja Alavesa's relationship with both other Basques and with neighbors across the Ebro to analyze the effects of the zone's border status on identity change.

At the pueblo level, I found that Basque identity was not replacing pueblo identity, but was intersecting it in some cases. Although there were disagreements within pueblos regarding Basque identity, some villages, such as

Lapuebla, were gaining the reputation of being "pro-Basque" or "Basque" communities, while others, such as Laguardia, were not. These Basque and non-Basque stereotypes were added to those each village already had of the other.

Many Lapueblans were identifying themselves as Basques, I propose, not because of a deep allegiance or affective attachment to a Basque ethnic group, but because identification with the now legitimate and influential Basque "nation" is a means of embellishing pueblo identity, of reinforcing Lapueblans' view that theirs is a superior village to that of near neighbors. A Basque ideology which regards such values as democracy and egalitarianism as definitive of the group, and which depicts Basques as an oppressed minority, is in line with many Lapueblans' ideology of who they are as a community. The differential historical development of Lapuebla and Laguardia has influenced contemporary Lapueblans' stereotypes of Laguardia as more elegant, more class divided, and without a strong work ethic, and of Lapueblans as hard workers, egalitarian and friendly. These stereotypes are reinforced for Lapueblans through aligning with Basque identity. Many Lapueblans also view Basques as a people who have prospered through hard work, as they feel they themselves have. I documented the interweaving of Basque and pueblo identity as evidenced in interpueblo stereotyping, village-level

elections, pueblo ritual, and the construction of the ikastola in Lapuebla.

Some Lapueblans associated a Basque value of independence with their own values of independence from exploitative landlords and from the large wineries which control the Riojan wine market. Few favored the Basque Country's independence from Spain, however. Most Lapueblans, and most other grape growers I knew in Rioja Alavesa, viewed the Basque government as having helped them expand and modernize vineyard and winery operations with grants and low-interest loans. In some instances, with this financial aid, family and cooperative wineries have succeeded in marketing their own wine, thereby gaining independence from the industrial wineries. Lapueblans felt they had taken greater advantage of these opportunities because, of course, they think they are better workers, with more interest and expertise in the viti-vinicultural lifeway than neighbors. But other growers in Rioja Alavesa, including many from Laguardia, have also benefitted.

Since the autonomous community of Rioja has not been able to offer as much assistance to its growers, this differential aid may contribute to a feeling of difference between growers on either side of the river. The Ebro River boundary dividing the autonomous Basque and Riojan communities is becoming more important in demarcating inhabitants' regional and ethnic identities than it had been

during the Franco era. The former province of Logroño adopted the name Rioja when the province gained autonomous community status in 1982. All the Rioja Alaveses who discussed this name change thought it was an unfair monopolization of a name they feel they rightly share. They said Rioja more accurately defines a geographic, wine growing district rather than a political community of Rioja which does not encompass the entire wine district. In addition, leaders of the autonomous community of Rioja, as in all the autonomous regions of Spain, are engaged in their own efforts to define and delimit the heritage and personality of a unique Riojan people, a people who fit into the political boundaries of the autonomous community of Rioja.

These issues illustrate some of the problems of borderland identity which this case brought to light. People of Rioja Alavesa continue to shop, work, conduct business, go to medical services, attend fiestas, socialize, and frequently marry, across the river. Most continue to say they have more in common with the lifeways and customs of the neighboring Riojanos than they do with northern Basques. Yet, many in Rioja Alavesa feel they are being alienated by the Riojan government, and also, by some Riojan bureaucrats and medical personnel they interact with in Logroño. Many said they detect prejudice against Basques in



Rioja. Here is what might be called a "push" - "pull" effect on identity change.

The exclusion some in Rioja Alavesa are beginning to feel from a name and a culture they thought they had shared may be a factor leading them to associate themselves with the Basque nation and to adoption of a regional/ethnic identity as Basques. The Spanish state recognizes Rioja Alavesa as part of the political, administrative unit of the autonomous Basque community, and Basque nationalist leaders seem to be welcoming Rioja Alaveses with open arms. But this explanation is too simple, because the people of Rioja Alavesa are actually receiving mixed messages about their eligibility to be first-class Basques and about their authenticity as Basques.

Basque leaders and scholars use historical interpretation and association of the viti-vinicultural lifeway as a unique Basque lifeway in attempts to expand the ideology of who is Basque to include inhabitants of Rioja Alavesa. Generous grants, loans and technical aid to the grape growers, and for public works, convey the interest of the Basque government in the zone. This support communicates to Rioja Alaveses that they are indeed part of the Basque Country. According to the historical interpretation, Basque tribes inhabited the zone before the Roman occupation, and dialects of Euskera were spoken in the area in both prehistoric and medieval times. Various

invaders, from the Romans through Franco, are depicted as having corrupted Basque culture and language. It follows, then, that Rioja Alaveses can regain and recover Basque identity. This is where this ideological framework becomes difficult and contradictory in Rioja Alaveses, because the message continues that the Basque language is the primary vessel for the maintenance and preservation of Basque identity.

Thus, knowing Euskera is an important marker of Basqueness, and is also materially rewarded by the Basque government in the form of requiring it for some government jobs. This focus on language imparts to many in Rioja Alaveses that living in a historic Basque region with ancestral links to Basque people, and/or allegiance to Basque political parties and agendas, is still not quite enough to gain them equal status and opportunity on par with speakers of Euskera. However, the message continues that the children of Rioja Alaveses can become better Basques by learning the language, and governmental language planning provides the means of accomplishing this.

As noted, many people in Lapuebla, and throughout Rioja Alaveses, favor membership in the Basque community, and Lapuebla has even gained the reputation of being a pro-Basque village. But when school teachers take Lapueblan children to Euskera-speaking villages in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa so that they can experience "true" Basque culture,

the implication is that Lapueblans do not measure up. Still, many Lapueblan parents agreed that their children should learn the language in order for them to enjoy the full benefits of belonging to the Basque community. Urla (1987) found that most Spanish immigrant parents in the Guipúzcoan town of Usurbil had similar practical motivations for their children to learn Euskera, rather than being motivated by the goal of recuperation of Basque identity. An analogy could be made to first generation immigrants to the United States who encourage their children to learn English in order for the next generation to get ahead in the new country, although the parents might never learn or perfect English themselves. But Rioja Alaveses did not have to leave home--the new country, of which they are historic if peripheral members, has come to them.

Linz (1980) and Heiberg (1980) have suggested that language should be de-emphasized as a primary identity marker if a Basque nation is to better incorporate the diverse peoples who live within the Basque community's political boundaries. The promotion of Euskera as the unifying symbol of Basque identity, with material rewards for knowing it, is alienating some in Rioja Alavesa who feel penalized for not knowing the language. And even many who advocate Basque identity said they feel like second-class Basques because they do not share this identity marker.

The mixed messages Rioja Alaveses receive regarding

their status as Basques causes ambiguity, and Rioja Alaveses were far from unanimous in their identification as Basque. Those who rejected Basque identity often said they did so because they felt it was being forced on them and that they thought Euskera-speaking northern Basques acted superior. These critics usually gave their political support to national Spanish political parties such as AP and PSOE, rather than to Basque political parties. This indicates some relationship between political party preference and adoption of Basqueness, although many who did vote for Basque political parties said they were motivated by practical concerns.

In addition to the contradictory messages Rioja Alaveses get from the Basque nationalist establishment regarding their status as Basques, their interactions with the inhabitants of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa tended to reinforce the perception of many inhabitants that they were not "Vasco-Vascos." Many of the northern Basques they knew as summer visitors to the area, or who they met when they went to the northern cities to work, especially the Euskera-speakers, were seen as fulfilling more of the requisite criteria of real Basqueness. But Rioja Alaveses is now part of the autonomous Basque community, and the extension of ethnic nation building strategies to the zone, as well as inhabitants' manipulation of this new identity option, provoke reconsideration of what it means to be a Basque.

The problem of defining a group identity which does not alienate the diverse people inhabiting an ethnic territory is also faced by the Catalans because of the large immigrant population in Catalonia. Woolard points to the ambiguity of the popular Catalan political slogan calling for "the national reconstruction of Catalonia" (1986:66-67). Does this mean economic and political integration or cultural and linguistic assimilation? (Ibid.). She comments:

Now that Catalan autonomy is a reality rather than a dream, and it is possible that the Catalan language may become a real prerequisite to a full life in Catalonia rather than simply an expressive symbol, there is danger of division in the community. (Woolard 1985:106)

Woolard found some Catalan politicians who actually wanted to "de-ethnicize" Catalan identity by de-emphasizing a focus on language. Stressing other criteria of identity, such as living in the region and allegiance to Catalonia, would help to reduce bias against immigrants (Woolard 1986).

Similarly, Linz (1980) has suggested a greater emphasis on "territoriality" in defining Basqueness--one becomes Basque by living and working in the Basque Country. Heiberg (1980) proposes changing the focus on language and race to "patriotism"--allegiance to the Basque nation--as a basis for Basque identity. Many Rioja Alaveses meet these criteria. In addition, some inhabitants feel they share what they perceive to be Basque values of democracy, egalitarianism and hard work. These values were, as discussed, already the bases of pueblo ideology in Lapuebla.

Affirmation of these values in Basque ideology strengthened Lapueblans' belief in the pueblo's superiority to neighboring villagers who, they felt, did not exhibit these values. This is an example of how Basque identity is being creatively manipulated and reinterpreted through local identity contexts in Rioja Alavesa.

Also, the Basque government's economic aid to the grape growers, and the romanticization of this lifeway in tourist brochures and guides to the Basque Country, reinforce identification with the viti-vinicultural lifeway in Rioja Alavesa. As the autonomous community of Rioja also uses the wine culture as a regional symbol, this identity is becoming more politicized. Rioja Alaveses are not losing identity as viti-viniculturists, but may find it increasingly advantageous to be Basque, rather than Riojan, growers. This indigenous identity is not being replaced, but rather incorporated, into a wider ethnic identity.

Another example of the incorporation of local custom into a larger context of identity is the participation of the Elciego dance troupe, and other dance troupes of Rioja Alavesa villages, into a wider federation of dance groups of Alava. In this way, the traditional dances of Elciego are merged into a regional Basque organization, and the custom is viewed as another example of Basque folklife, rather than replaced by traditions from the northern provinces. In these ways, Rioja Alaveses contribute to reconsideration of

what it means to be Basque, and to reconsideration of ideologies of Basqueness which focus on traits of the heartland zones.

There are contradictory forces at work here--at the same time efforts are made to incorporate the Rioja Alaveses people and lifeways into the Basque nation, (with many Rioja Alaveses participating in and influencing these processes), the message is still that the northern Basque native Euskera speakers, the Euskaldunes, are the truest of Basques. This issue poses a dilemma for Basque, Catalan and other leaders of ethnic nationalist movements. Will a de-emphasis on one of the surviving unique features of the Basques, their language, diminish Basque claims of distinction from Spaniards, and therefore, weaken demands for greater autonomy and rights based on their status as a separate nation within the Spanish state? Yet, will emphasis on the language as a primary marker, and on customs and history associated with the heartland zones, alienate people who do not share in these markers and thereby reduce the political support Basque nationalists need to expand and strengthen a Basque nation? The case of Rioja Alaveses illustrates that there are no easy answers to these difficult questions.

When I delivered a paper (Hendry 1988) on the introduction of Euskera to Rioja Alaveses, a Basque anthropologist in the audience asked me why I had focused my research on these "marginal" Basques. She suggested my

paper, which presented instrumental motivations for support of language policies in Rioja Alavesa, did not accurately represent the majority of Basques. I agreed with her--Rioja Alaveses are considered peripheral Basques by those who define Basqueness based on the markers associated with northern Basques. But this is precisely why such a group should be studied if we hope to refine understandings of ethnicity and ethnic movements, and if we want to learn about the effects of political, economic and social change on real people's lives.

Anthropologists traditionally perceived ethnic groups as bounded units, identifiable by a discrete list of racial, cultural, territorial, and genealogical markers. But focus on the study of ethnic "cores" ignores the fallout of ethnic movements on peripheral peoples who are nonetheless affected. The case of Rioja Alavesa demonstrates the flexibility of ethnic boundaries. The border status of the zone highlights the complexity of defining a Basque ethnic group--political and cultural boundaries do not coincide in this case. The dynamics of identity change documented in this study do not neatly fit into old models of the "ethnics" versus the "others." Here, peripheral, would-be Basques receive contradictory messages from Basque leaders regarding their authenticity as Basques, while they are increasingly identified as Basques by their Riojan neighbors with whom they share an environment and lifeway. Political



changes in the wider order (e.g. democratization in Spain and legitimization of the autonomous communities), have precipitated the current debates about Basque identity in Rioja Alavesa.

Most Rioja Alaveses did not define themselves as Basque until Alava joined the 1979 autonomous Basque community, nor were they considered Basques by northern Basques when they migrated to work in northern Basque cities. The case of Rioja Alavesa supports Nagel's (1986) view that processes of ethnic nation building often expand the membership base of the ethnic group. Keyes (1981) states that changes in political boundaries and administrative policies can precipitate ethnic change while Rothschild (1981) suggests that as ethnic groups politicize, ethnic leaders select cultural markers in formulating an ethnic ideology to coalesce support. This ideology is often introduced through formal schooling, rituals, political rallies, periodical and book publications, and other public contexts (Keyes 1981:15). Such processes of change were occurring in Rioja Alavesa.

Evidence from prehistory and history is used to establish Rioja Alaveses' ancestral link to Basques and the Basque language is being revived in the area as another marker to distinguish Rioja Alaveses as Basque. Thus, the interpretation of territorial and ancestral ties provides Rioja Alaveses with two of the characteristics often used to

define ethnic groups--association with a territory, and descent from common ancestors. The introduction of the language, although controversial, furnishes another marker typically used to demarcate ethnic groups.

However, processes of change are complex in this border zone. For example, although there are certainly grounds for Basque heritage in the area, it was not a heritage people were particularly aware of or attached to prior to 1979. It is a heritage open to debate--Riojanos across the river share this heritage of Basque influence, but choose to de-emphasize or ignore it in efforts to distinguish themselves from Basques. If the northern boundary of the province of Logroño had been stabilized at the Cantabrian Mountains instead of the Ebro River, Rioja Alavesa history would likely be interpreted differently today. If Logroño, now the autonomous community of Rioja, had included Rioja Alavesa and the grape-growing zones of Navarra, there would have been a greater correlation between ecological, cultural and political boundaries--but, such correlations have been the exception rather than the rule in the establishment of political boundaries not only in Spain, but throughout the world.

Some in Rioja Alavesa use the indications of Basque influence in the zone in defending a Basque identity for the area. But, as noted, this is an optional interpretation. Other people used different historical interpretation, and

the lack of Euskera use in the zone in six centuries, to oppose Basque identity for Rioja Alavesa and deny that they are Basques. Rioja Alaveses associate with a Basque identity, and/or are considered "pro-Basque" by their neighbors, in the following ways: historical interpretation, voting for a Basque political party, supporting the Basque government's language policies, claiming allegiance to the Basque nation. Even though they may say that they vote Basque and want their children to learn Euskera for practical reasons, these actions label them as more Basque in the eyes of Rioja Alaveses who reject Basque politics and language. But, as discussed, there are degrees and hierarchies of Basqueness, and these new Basques of Rioja Alavesa generally do not consider themselves, nor are they considered by the wider Basque community, to be as genuinely Basque as "los Vasco-Vascos" of the north.

In addition to exploring changing definitions of identity in Rioja Alavesa, and demonstrating the subjective, malleable nature of ethnic identity in this border zone, this study draws attention to the divergence in motivations for participation in ethnic movements between leaders and "the folk." Most analysts focus on the origins of ethnic movements, and the motivations of the leaders who organize them, in discussions of ethnic resurgence. Anthropology can contribute on-the-ground ethnographic insight into the

motivations and beliefs of the "ordinary folk" for participating in an ethnic movement.

For example, most of those in Rioja Alavesa who supported the Basque movement said they did so for practical reasons--but not in the sense of wanting to improve the economic standing of the Basque nation versus the Spanish state. These people were interested in the economic betterment of their own farms and of improving the employment opportunities of their children. For some, identifying as Basque also meets affective and psychological needs, but not in the sense of feeling connected to "the Basque people," and therefore less alienated in the homogenizing modern world, a primary motivation for ethnic identity proposed by some scholars (da Silva 1975, Beer 1980, Mayo 1974). Rather, as demonstrated in the case of Lapuebla, Basque identity is being used to enhance pueblo identity--it is a means for people to feel better about themselves in comparison to their neighbors six kilometers away. This case supports the view (Douglass 1988, Bentley 1987, Smith 1984, 1986, Keyes 1981) that both affective and material "needs" should be examined as motivations for ethnic movements, but emphasizes the importance of distinguishing the motivations of ethnic leaders and the folk.

Anthropologists are well equipped for this task. Our traditional methodology of participant observation in small

communities or neighborhoods can be used to analyze the effects of larger political, economic and social changes on "ordinary" people. Grillo (1980) and Freeman (1973) call for anthropological investigation of nation-, and ethnic nation-building in Europe, to understand how these processes affect communities and individuals, and to refine models and theories of ethnic identity. Such understandings are increasingly relevant as ethnic conflict in Europe and elsewhere challenges established political boundaries and power bases.

Anthropologists and other scholars have often been advocates of ethnic minorities who are organizing to counter the oppression and neglect of a central state (Khleif 1980, Hendry 1983, Mayo 1974, Smith 1986, Despres 1975). But we need to be aware of both positive, and potentially negative, aspects of ethnic mobilization (Royce 1982, Edwards 1985). For example, politicization based on an assumed shared identity may exclude or penalize those in the ethnic territory who do not meet the identity criteria. The criticism might also be made that ethnic nationalist leaders, in attempting to redress their cultural, political and economic domination by central state authorities, may impose on minorities within the political boundary of the ethnic territory similar demands for conformity that the central state imposed on the ethnic group. While calling for the state's recognition of ethnic diversity, ethnic

leaders may not be completely tolerant of diversity within the territory. These are some of the dangers of attempting to correlate cultural and linguistic boundaries with political boundaries.

Nation building, ethnic or otherwise, is capable of creating a separatist ideology which may harden group interest into perceived superiority (Edwards 1985). But as nation-state and class affiliations fail to meet the material and affective needs of many ethnic minorities, such groups increasingly turn to ethnic political organization. Although the critiques of ethnic movements need to be considered, the relative flexibility of a group's ethnic boundaries and ideologies may determine the group's degree of openness or closure. I observed contradictory processes at work in Rioja Alavesa--while many Rioja Alaveses participate in creative identity manipulation, using association with the Basque nation to meet local needs; they still receive messages from the Basque establishment that they do not quite qualify for "first-class" Basque status.

The "opening" of Basque identity, and the widening of ethnic boundaries, are in process. The activities and choices of ordinary people in Rioja Alavesa reverberate back to the ethnic core, and cause reconsideration of what it means to be a Basque. It remains to be seen how Basque ideology will evolve and adapt to better incorporate diverse groups within the ethnic territory, and if succeeding

generations of Rioja Alaveses will assimilate more of the attributes, specifically, the language, currently associated with true Basque identity. There are rich grounds for future research here.

Rioja Alavesa has been borderland and battleground for Christians and Moors, for Castilians and Navarrese. Since 1979, it became part of the borderland and buffer zone of the autonomous Basque community and the rest of Spain. Many people in Rioja Alavesa are attempting to use this newly acquired status as frontier of the autonomous Basque community to their own best advantage, while others are disclaiming association with a Basque identity. These activities are part of another historical phase of adaptation to fluctuating political boundaries in this transitional zone, and highlight the adaptive and dynamic aspects of human cultural production.

APPENDIX A  
\*INTERVIEW SCHEDULE USED FOR INFORMAL  
FAMILY INTERVIEWS

Datos Estadísticos  
(Basic Statistics)

1. Nombres y edades de los miembros de la familia.  
(Names and ages of family members)
2. Lugar de nacimiento de cada miembro.  
(Place of birth of each family member)
3. ¿De dónde son tus padres?  
(Where are your parents from?)
4. ¿En qué has trabajado?  
(What is your work history?)

Costumbres y Tradiciones  
(Customs and Traditions)

5. ¿Qué virgen consideras tu patrona?  
(What virgin do you consider your patron?)
6. ¿Tienes en casa imágenes o estampas de alguna virgen?  
(Do you have any statues or pictures of any virgin in the home?)
7. ¿A qué fiesta vas, a la de Logroño o a la de Vitoria?  
¿Sabes las fechas y el santo patrón de la fiesta de cada una de estas ciudades o sólo de una de ellas?  
(Which fiesta do you go to, Logroño's or Vitoria's?)  
Do you know the date of the patron saint of the fiesta of each of these cities or only of one of them?)
8. ¿Qué bandera prefieres? ¿Cuándo la usas y cómo? ¿La llevas en el coche? ¿La pones en casa, en las calles para la fiesta?  
(Which flag do you prefer? When do you use it and how? Do you have a flag sticker on your car? Do you put it outside your house for the fiesta?)
9. ¿Hay juegos y costumbres típicos de tu localidad? ¿Son distintos de los de Rioja?



(Are there games and customs typical of your locale?  
Are they different from those of Rioja?)

10. ¿Hay platos y comidas típicos del lugar? ¿Y con qué zona existe mayor relación?  
(Are there dishes and foods typical of this place?)  
And to which zone do they have the most resemblance?)
11. ¿Cuál es, para ti, a lo largo del año, la fiesta o día más señalado e importante?  
(Which is, for you, the most outstanding and important fiesta or day of the year?)
12. ¿Qué equipo de fútbol prefieres?  
(What is your favorite football team?)

¿De dónde eres?

13. Supongamos que un día, paseando por El Espolón de Logroño y alguien te preguntas, ¿De dónde eres? ¿Qué responderías?  
(Let's suppose one day, strolling about the Espolón of Logroño, someone asks you, "Where are you from?" What would you answer?)
14. ¿Si estás en otras regiones de España?  
(If you are in other regions of Spain?)
15. ¿Si estás en un viaje por el extranjero?  
(If you are on a trip out of the country?)

Tipos de Caracter, Relaciones con otros lugares:

16. ¿Crees que gente tienen caracteres distintos entre Rioja Alavesa, Rioja Alta, Rioja Baja, Cameros, Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, el resto de Alava, los pueblos aquí alrededor?  
(Do you think the character of people is different in Rioja Alavesa, Rioja Alta, Rioja Baja, Cameros, Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, the rest of Alava, the pueblos around here?)
17. ¿Tienes más relaciones, intercambio, con Fuenmayor, Navarrete, Cenicerro, o con otros pueblos de Rioja Alavesa, por ejemplo, Elciego, Laguardia?  
(Do you have more relations, interchange, with Fuenmayor, Navarrete, Cenicerro, or with other pueblos of of Rioja Alavesa, like Elciego, Laguardia?)
18. ¿Fueron las relaciones con otros pueblos diferentes antes? ¿Cómo?  
(Were the relations with other pueblos different before? How?)

19. ¿A qué fiestas de estos pueblos de alrededor prefieres ir?  
(Which fiestas of these nearby pueblos do you prefer to go to?)
20. Tu forma de hablar, ¿con qué zona la asemejas?  
(Your manner of speaking, which zone does it resemble?)
21. ¿De quién dices normalmente que es vasco?  
(Who do you normally say is Basque?)
22. ¿Son gente distinta los Vascos que vienen durante el verano?  
(Are the Basque who come in the summer a distinct people?)
23. ¿Qué sientes cuando estos vascos hablan Euskera aquí en Lapuebla?  
(What do you feel when those Basques speak Euskera here in Lapuebla?)

#### Servicios y Compras

24. ¿Adónde vas normalmente para ir de compras?  
(Where do you normally go shopping?)
25. ¿Al hospital?  
(To the hospital?)
26. ¿Qué periódico lees?  
(What newspaper do you read?)

#### Educación - Linguística

27. ¿Hablas euskera?  
(Do you speak Euskera?)
28. ¿Te gustaría hablarlo?  
(Would you like to speak it?)
29. ¿Qué crees sobre la enseñanza del euskera a los niños en Rioja Alavesa?  
(What do you think about the teaching of Euskera to the children of Rioja Alavesa?)
30. ¿Llevas a los niños a la ikastola?  
(Do your children go to the ikastola?)

#### Política/Economía

31. ¿Qué partido votas? ¿en las elecciones locales?  
¿en las elecciones nacionales?

(What party do you vote for? Local elections? National elections?)

32. ¿Qué crees sobre la independencia para el País Vasco?  
(What do you think about independence for the Basque Country?)
33. ¿Crees que la autonomía ha beneficiado Rioja Alavesa?  
(Do you think that the autonomous community has benefitted Rioja Alavesa?)
34. ¿Qué crees sobre la ayuda del gobierno del País Vasco a los agricultores de Rioja Alavesa?  
(What do you think about the help of the government of of the Basque Country to the growers of Rioja Alavesa?)
35. ¿Crees que la entrada de España en el mercado común va a ayudarles?  
(Do you think that the entrance of Spain into the Common Market is going to help you all?)
36. ¿Cuál es, en tu opinión, el problema más grave con el que tiene que enfrentarse Rioja Alavesa en la actualidad?  
(What is, in your opinion, the worst problem Rioja Alavesa has to confront?)

\*A number of the questions used in this interview schedule were adapted from questionnaires designed by Maribel Fociles Rubio and José Lisón Arcal.

APPENDIX B  
QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO IKASTOLA STUDENTS

\*ENCUESTA SOBRE EUSKARA

Tu edad: \_\_\_\_\_ curso: \_\_\_\_\_ sexo: \_\_\_\_\_

1. ¿Cuántos años lleva estudiando euskara? \_\_\_\_\_
2. ¿Hay otros miembros de su familia que habla euskara? \_\_\_\_  
¿Quién? \_\_\_\_\_
3. ¿De dónde es su padre? \_\_\_\_\_
4. ¿De dónde es su madre? \_\_\_\_\_
5. ¿Habla euskara fuera de la Ikastola?  

|                |                  |              |
|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| <u>casi</u>    | <u>de vez</u>    | <u>casi</u>  |
| <u>siempre</u> | <u>en cuando</u> | <u>nunca</u> |

  - a. ¿en casa? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. ¿en la calle? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. ¿en otras ocasiones? \_\_\_\_\_  
¿cuándo?: \_\_\_\_\_
6. ¿Por qué lo habla o no? \_\_\_\_\_
7. ¿Para qué piensa que le va a servir la euskara? \_\_\_\_\_
8. ¿Qué planes tiene para su futuro? \_\_\_\_\_
9. ¿Dónde prefiere trabajar y vivir? \_\_\_\_\_

\*(for translation of questionnaire, see next page)

QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT EUSKERA

Your Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many years have you studied Euskara? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do other members of your family speak Euskara? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where is your father from? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where is your mother from? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you speak Euskara outside of the Ikastola? \_\_\_\_\_  

|               |              |               |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <u>almost</u> | <u>some-</u> | <u>almost</u> |
| <u>always</u> | <u>times</u> | <u>never</u>  |

  - a. at home? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. in the street? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. on other occasions? \_\_\_\_\_  
when?: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Why do you speak it or not? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What do you think Euskara is good for? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What plans do you have for your future? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Where do you prefer to work and live? \_\_\_\_\_

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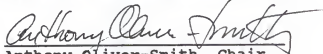
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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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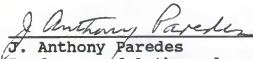
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